

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1903.

## JOHN MAXWELL'S MARRIAGE.

### CHAPTER IX.

It was now well advanced in the afternoon, and the sunlight began to slant into the end of the dining-room by a tall window which faced toward the slope of lawn and wooded hill-side. Mr. Nesbit sat at the head of his table, Jack on his right, the Dean on his left. Next the Dean was Sir Garrett Lambert. Jack's right hand neighbour was sunk into sonorous sleep; and the group of four at the head of the board were marked off from the rest of the company, who drank hard, noisily enough, yet with a kind of fear that kept their faces averted, save now and then for a quick glance in Mr. Nesbit's direction.

The severance was by no will of the host's; he exerted himself to be affable with men to whom at other times he would scarcely have addressed a roadside salutation. "A glass of wine with you, Major Pearse," he said to a sodden half-pay officer who sat at the further end of the board. But the clear hard cut accents had something sinister behind their affability.

Major Pearse bowed awkwardly and tossed off his glass. "He's mighty civil, then, this day," he grumbled to his neighbour, "but, begad, it's like drinking wine with a thunderstorm."

Dean Vigors, however, lent an air  
No. 523.—VOL. LXXXVIII.

of geniality that somewhat mitigated the aspect of the gathering. With his wig a trifle pushed back, his white bands a little rumped, yet preserving an elegance in their disorder, he smiled with a glow of condescension on the entire company. Refilling his glass from the great punch-bowl before it set out on yet another circuit, "James," he said, "I wonder to see you so exotic in your habits. You are constant to the claret—excellent claret, though a rascal purveyed it. But I hold that a man should drink at Rome what Rome drinks; and at Rome I drink Falernian, at Paris Bordeaux or Burgundy, and in Ireland the whisky of your mountains. Mr. Maxwell, I am glad to see you are of my party."

Jack indeed had not spared the claret, and now he was drinking the punch fiercely. What would at another time have stupefied him, now in the high-strung state of his nerves only added to his excitement. He was in that confident stage of wine when a man has no suspicion that he is drunk, but feels convinced of his own wit and perspicacity. Skilfully drawn on by Dean Vigors, he spoke out all the schemes which hurt vanity, swift in such inventions, proffered to his young imagination. And the coarse commentary of Garrett Lambert, though it offended, did not reduce him to the silence of disgust.

It irritated without checking his desire for self-assertion.

"Yes, Mr. Dean," he replied to the challenge, stumbling slightly over the syllables as he turned the phrase, "I drink whisky. Whisky is better to laugh on."

"Excellent, Mr. Maxwell," assented the Dean. "You are determined to laugh, then."

"Why, sir," replied Jack, leaning with flushed face across his host, "some one said there were two sorts of people in the world—the laughers and the laughed-at. And to my thinking it lies in your own choice which you shall belong to. And you see now, sir, being so situated that I must either cry or laugh, I laugh, sir. *Aut comedia aut tragedia*. Life is as you take it." And he drained his glass.

"Damme, Maxwell," struck in Sir Garrett, who had listened with a sarcastic smile, "I admire your philosophy. I doubt if I should find it so laughable to be jilted. But every man to his taste. What do you say, Mr. Nesbit?"

Mr. Nesbit started slightly. He had seemed as if listening to the talk, yet it was but with half his mind. "Say, sir?" he answered, "I say that Jack's is a wise method. Laughter is a rapier that can parry as well as thrust. But for my part," he added grimly, "I trust to heavier weapons. I should have word soon from Ross, and the hue and cry is out by this after O'Donnell."

"Well, James," put in the Dean, with a leer that sat ill on his clerical countenance, "I say nothing against these measures. Revenge is sweet doubtless. But were I Mr. Maxwell I would seek revenge in a more palatable direction."

"You would provide yourself with a mistress, sir?" broke in Sir Garrett with his coarse laugh, "if you were not

already provided, as would be the more reasonable, and, may be, the more likely."

The Dean made a bland gesture of deprecation. "I speak, sir, according to the flesh, and I speak impersonally."

"By God, Mr. Dean," answered Sir Garrett with a grin, "I doubt there is more of the flesh in your composition than in Mr. Maxwell's. Have you not noticed, sir, that these mischances befall none so often as your delicate lovers?"

Jack flushed angrily. "Delicacy," he said,—and, his tongue tripping a little, he repeated the word with careful enunciation,—"delicacy has never stood in your way, I am sure, Lambert."

"No, by God, then, neither it has, sir," answered the other with his whinnying laugh. "I never gave a woman the chance to change her mind yet."

Dean Vigors leaned persuasively across the table towards Jack. "Believe me, Mr. Maxwell, that, although our friend here expresses himself with some lack of refinement, there is sound philosophy in what he says. Woman, sir, is naturally hesitant, and she abhors the state of doubt; her gratitude is all for the one who—cuts the Gordian knot, shall I say?"

Lambert laughed uproariously, and Jack looked at him with intensified dislike. "Well, sir," he answered, "I cannot promise to find my consolations so easily as Sir Garrett. I must pursue my own methods—but I promise you it shall be to find my own pleasure."

Mr. Nesbit looked at the lad's angry face as he spoke; then raising his glass he touched it on Jack's. "Your health, Jack. I never knew you yet speak otherwise than as a gentleman should. I am of your mind. No, sir, it is not by picking

up with some dirty street-wench or caat mistress that you shall make your reprisals, but by providing yourself, if that is to be the word, with better than you lost."

It was Sir Garrett's turn to flush now, and he turned an ugly red as Mr. Nesbit spoke. But before he could answer the door opened, and old George came in hurriedly.

"Paddy Kelly is back, your honour, and a note with him."

Mr. Nesbit's eyes gleamed. "Bid him come in," he said, with a touch of jubilation. Then turning to the company, "Gentlemen, I trust I shall have news for you."

There was an expectant silence in the room, broken by the snores of Jack's neighbour. Two other drunken men awoke, and rubbing their eyes, asked sleepily, "What is it?" In the hush, the door opened, and a lad of about nineteen came in, looking sullen and frightened. He was dressed in a soiled hunting coat, tattered breeches, and burst boots.

Mr. Nesbit snatched the letter which he carried from his hand, and read, the whole company watching him as he fixed eager eyes on the sheet. For an instant, a contraction that was almost a spasm crossed his face; he drew in his shoulders and his hands tightened on the paper. Then he set a fierce stare on the boy who shuffled from foot to foot under the scrutiny.

Smoothing out the letter which he had crumpled to a ball, Mr. Nesbit again looked at it. No word was said in the room. Then he spoke, and his cold voice was vibrant with restrained passion. "Mr. Ross says he did not receive my message till two in the afternoon. I saw you cross the hill at twenty minutes after nine. You have come back in three hours. What kept you on your way in the morning?"

"Please your honour, the horse

went lame on me, but I got a new shoe put on him in Portnakill, and he was well able for it coming back." The boy spoke volubly enough, but he avoided Mr. Nesbit's eye. Mr. Nesbit pushed his chair back a little, and turned sideways to face him full. "He went lame, did he? Listen to me, Paddy," he went on, gentle as a cat with a mouse. "From half-past nine to two o'clock is four hours and a half. And what distance is it from the top of the Slieve Alt road to Portnakill? Speak up, sir," he snapped, with a sudden flash of violence.

The boy's body writhed, as he shifted on his feet, answering, "Twelve long mile, your honour."

"Twelve long miles, Paddy. You may say that, since it took you four and a half hours to travel them. Two miles and three quarters in the hour. And you could not borrow a horse? Or leave the horse and run? I will teach you, sir, to loiter," he said with a snap of his teeth, rising to his feet. "Excuse me, gentlemen, for a moment. Come, boy."

Jack Maxwell listened to all this in a kind of dream. Since he had stopped talking, his mind grew sluggish. He guessed well enough what all this meant. Every servant on the place was devoted to Mary Nesbit, and Paddy, like the rest, had conspired to help her. Paddy doubtless had shaken his sides over the cleverness of the girl who used one lover to help her to a meeting with his favoured rival. Well, Paddy was going to pay for it.

As the door closed upon Mr. Nesbit, Dean Vigors picked up the letter which had been flung on the table and glanced at it. "Read it out, Mr. Dean," said Sir Garrett chuckling; "let us see what stuck so in Nesbit's gizzard. By God, I thought he would choke when he read it."

The Dean read:

SIR,—Your messenger reaches me at two of the afternoon, when I am sitting down to dinner. By what I can learn from him, it appears that McLoughlin's sloop went out of Douros early in the morning, and with this favourable breeze, she must be off Malin Head by now. Pursuit is therefore useless, and her passengers stand every chance of a fair voyage. I take occasion, Sir, to observe that had you, in your zeal for the King's service, warned me earlier of McLoughlin's movements the information could have reached me in time to make a seizure certain. I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient, JAMES ROSS.

A murmur went up from the table. "Begad," said Major Pearse, speaking the feeling of many, "it's long since James Nesbit got a slap in the face like that. I wouldn't be in Paddy's shoes for a hundred."

"Open the door, Pearse," Sir Garrett cried, "I'll wager we shall hear some of the fun. Ay—hark to that," he added, as the door was opened, and through the stone hall there came from the direction of Nesbit's office the thud of desperate blows between cries of pain.

"I trust there may be no misadventure," said Dean Vigors lazily, but with a quickening of the eye. "I saw James thrash a dog once that had snapped at him. He got it by the scruff of the neck, and when he was done beating it the animal did not get up again."

"Well, the play is ended now, any way," said Pearse, closing the door and stumbling drunkenly to his seat, in haste like a schoolboy who fears detection. In a moment Mr. Nesbit entered, his thin face flushed, his quick decisive step a little quickened, his breathing heightened. His dress was still neat, and as he entered he smoothed out the ruffles at his wrists. But the seam of the coat was burst at the shoulder.

"I ask your pardon for deserting you, gentlemen," he said, resuming his

seat at the head of the table, but in a posture very different from the lounging sprawl of his company. "I find myself in the presence of a conspiracy and I am obliged to correct at once. It is hard to say where the treachery may spread."

His words roused Jack's half forgotten resentment. "Spread, sir!" he stammered, finding speech an increasing difficulty. "The whole country-side has been in the plot, and you and I the only souls who were in ignorance. There was the whole rabble of your tenantry gathered in your avenue to jeer at me and Hamilton when we passed this morning."

Mr. Nesbit pushed his chair back with the air of one who finally arrives at a decision. "Did they so?" he said. "Well, Jack, you and I will take order with them when we have settled this business. There is satisfaction owing to you from this house, and you shall have it, here and now, sir. My daughter has jilted you; that cannot be helped. But I have another daughter of some name for beauty, and, sir, she shall be yours."

#### CHAPTER X.

A HUSH of stupefaction fell on the room. Jack's mind, working dizzily through a mist of wine, had only one clear perception. Full opposite him was the leering face of Garrett Lambert, which through all that interminable day had acted as an irritant on his nerves. And now, with the quickness of hate, he saw a dull flush spread over Lambert's face, an aspect of discomfort and what he knew to be envy. He saw, and a sullen joy rose in his heart. Here beyond a doubt was his triumph—here was the confusion of this chief of the mockers.

Dean Vigors leaned across Mr.



Nesbit and stretched out a moist hand. "Mr. Maxwell, I congratulate you on the rarest good fortune. 'Tis as though a man should lose a goose and be compensated with a swan."

But Lambert rose clumsily from his seat and, lurching as he walked, came round to Mr. Nesbit. "Sir," he said, "this is a bad hour for business, but I wish a word with you in private before this goes farther."

Jack flung himself back in his seat with an insolent gesture. "If Sir Garrett Lambert desires to advance any claim in opposition to mine, I am ready to settle the matter between us by the customary methods."

But Mr. Nesbit rose to his feet. "Come, gentlemen, there is no occasion for this. Pray be seated, Sir Garrett. I have made my offer, and if Jack Maxwell chooses to put upon me the indignity of a refusal, I have nothing to say against it."

The young baronet was clumsily resuming his seat, but he paused to speak. "I should have thought, sir," he said with a venomous malignity, "that the delicacy of which Mr. Maxwell makes so much, would prevent him from offering to marry a lady who had never set eyes upon him, and who may have other prospects. Miss Nesbit is entitled to look for a better match."

"Sir Garrett, sir, would prefer the matter to be decided by a comparison," said Jack, triumphantly but with laborious elocution,—"a comparison of rent-rolls, rather than by the method of decision which I set before him."

Sir Garrett only scowled. "Damn your methods," he retorted. "I say the girl should be allowed to choose for herself."

"Sir Garrett," broke in Mr. Nesbit sharply, "you will be pleased to observe proper civility. And I would have you to understand, sir, that

Miss Nesbit knows her duty and will do it when it is placed before her."

"But, James," said Dean Vigors, "is it not proper at least that the young lady and gentleman should be presented to each other. As I understand, they have not met."

The Dean, as he spoke, passed his tongue luxuriously round his full lips. He loved a scene, and here were the makings of one. And to embellish his vinous imaginings with the present spectacle of so beautiful a woman would be entirely to his liking.

The company chimed in with their various voices. "Ay, sir, let him see the girl." "Twill hearten him better than all our consolations." "Let Miss Isabel come down: why, the half of us came here to-day to look at her."

Mr. Nesbit rose and stepped over to the bell. "Certainly, gentlemen, it is the least ceremony that we can show you. But you must allow the ladies a little time to make themselves fine; we need not part you so soon from the bottle."

Hurrying steps were heard in the hall in answer to his ring, and old George entered with a countenance full of relief. "Glory be to God, your honour," he cried, "he's come to himself!"

Mr. Nesbit frowned. "What do you mean, sir?"

"Pat Kelly, sir. I made sure you would be ringing to know if he was dead."

"Do you think, you blockhead, that I would disturb gentlemen over their wine to have news of that young blackguard?" was the fierce answer. "Go up at once to Mrs. Nesbit's room and say that Mr. Maxwell wishes to be presented to Miss Isabella, and that I desire her and her mother to make themselves ready to receive their company in the drawing-room."

The old man's face fell and he hesi-

tated for a moment; then, as his master snarled at him "Go, sir," he hurried out of the door, muttering confusedly.

Mr. Nesbit rose again to his feet. "You must excuse me once more, gentlemen: and you, Thorpe," he said to his attorney, who sat near the foot of the table, "will come with me. It will be necessary, Jack, to alter the names in the settlements; but I need not trouble you with that formality. When they are ready, Thorpe and I will bring them here for your signature. Vigors, will you take my place and keep the bottle moving! By your leave, gentlemen."

As he went out at the door, alert as ever, followed by the rolling feet of Mr. Thorpe, who lurched heavily on the polished boards, a general sense of relief came over his guests. Tongues were unloosed. "Trust Nesbit not to forget the settlements," was the first sentence in half-a-dozen mouths. Then they settled down to rally the bridegroom with all the freedom of that age, which, till then, Mr. Nesbit's punctilious nicety of language had restrained.

Who says there is truth in wine? Drink distorts, exaggerates, over-emphasises, plays on a foible till it becomes a passion ready to flash into crimes. And of all foibles none is so strong and universal in the drunken as the fear and resentment of ridicule. Dread of ridicule is specially a young man's weakness, and Jack had perhaps more than his share of it; and all this day hurt vanity, supersensitive, had been screaming with rage in him. Now he saw himself in a pass where to recede would be to double and treble the load of ridicule upon him. To stick at nothing had become a fixed idea in his imagination. And beside it was implanted another. To go back was to give a triumph to Garrett Lambert, and Lambert stood to him for the whole

sniggering world, in whose sneering face he had been tempted half-a-dozen times to dash a wineglass. To go on, was to make this Lambert green with envy and mortification. Such was the choice. And so Jack accepted the coarse raillery and the coarse congratulation, with all his squeamishness in revolt, yet with a fierce kind of triumph. As for the girl, he scarcely gave her a thought; his one desire was to be through with his period of torment, to be loosed from the stake to which he was bound. He realised nothing beyond the moment; there was no forecast even of sensuality in his thought. Still, he felt a stirring of curiosity, mingled with some proprietary resentment, as the new bride was canvassed over the table. Dean Vigors rose to a tipsey eloquence upon the charms of her person.

"Ay, Mr. Dean," bawled Major Pearse from his end of the table, "but don't forget she's James Nesbit's daughter. By God, Maxwell, she won't let you forget it. There's little of the mother in her. A touch-me-if-you-dare woman as ever I saw. Faith,"—and he made a show of whispering to his next neighbour, who burst into drunken guffaws.

"What's that, Pearse?" said Sir Garrett with his ugly sneer, "are you wondering if delicacy will answer better with her than with her sister?"

A roar of laughter followed, and Jack, pushing back his chair, stumbled to his feet. "Sir!" he cried, flaming with anger. But at the same instant the door opened, and Mr. Nesbit entered, followed by the lawyer bearing documents and an inkhorn.

"Come, gentlemen," he said, seeing Jack's angry gesture, "let us have no quarrelling. We shall join the ladies in a moment." He rang again. As the old butler appeared, "Go up, George," he said, "and enquire of

Mrs. Nesbit if she and Miss Isabel are ready."

The delay lengthened to several minutes, and Mr. Nesbit beat impatiently on the floor with his foot, while curious and amused expectation was in the eyes of all. Pearse at the far end spoke aside to his neighbour, but Mr. Nesbit's ear caught the whisper.

"What is that you say, sir?" he cried angrily. "Refuse to come down! By heaven, sir, you seem to think I am not master in my own house!"

As he spoke, the door opened, and old George appeared with a frightened face. "Well, sir," thundered his master.

"Please your honour," he answered tremulously, "Mrs. Nesbit is not fit to stir."

Mr. Nesbit sprang to his feet. "Not fit to stir! Go up then, and bid Miss Isabel come down instantly."

Men nudged each other under the table. The old butler shook where he stood, as he spoke again in deprecating accents. "Please your honour, maybe you would go up yourself and speak to Miss Isabel. She wouldn't listen to a word."

Nesbit's face went dead white, his eyes contracted to a point, his nose grew pinched. "So, sir?" he said. And without another word, he walked out of the room, his body quivering.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE centre of Douros House was a square well, lit from the top, and occupied by the broad, white stone stair, with its balustrade of wrought iron. Round the top ran galleries from which the bedrooms opened. Mrs. Nesbit's room was over the drawing-room, with a window east and a window south; its door in the east gallery nearly faced the top of the stair.

Mr. Nesbit ran up the broad steps with his light quick tread, and went to open the door. He found it locked, and in a sudden passion shook at the handle with all his force, crying, "Open." He heard his wife's voice tremulous and pleading.

"It's Mr. Nesbit, my dear; it's your father. Be quick now and let him in. You must, you know."

A sullen step crossed the room and the door was thrown open. The angry man strode into the spacious cool bed-chamber, its walls hung with white flowered paper, the great bed canopied with a pink chintz. Mrs. Nesbit loved air and faint cool colours.

She was lying now, rather than seated, on a great chintz-covered sofa, and she struggled to rise as he entered, a loose pink dressing-gown falling about her. Isabella stood beside her mother, a strange contrast to the little soft, frail, pleading figure. She was fully dressed, and the great hoop spread out the gorgeous plum-coloured silk of her sacque in heavy folds. The frills of her sleeves, a yard wide, fell over the stiff structure with imposing dignity; her cap, peaked in the centre, Mary Stuart fashion, rose high over her drawn-back hair. She was not above the middle height, but she had that perfection of figure which makes it easy for a skilful costumier to produce the effect that is desired, and Isabella always desired to be of commanding presence.

Her face conformed exactly to the taste of that time in beauty. It was a pure oval; the forehead was high, slightly receding, and a little narrow; nothing square cut, whether in the line of jaw or temple; the eyes long and full. Her year of fine society had given just that touch of definition and distinction to her carriage, and even, as it seemed, to the moulding of her features, which in girlhood they had lacked; but neither

balls nor card-parties had taken from her the supreme feminine attraction so seldom allied with dignity of feature. She had by nature, inherited from her parents, and brought to perfection by the soft airs of her home, the beauty which all cosmetics vainly endeavour to imitate—that exquisite bloom of the skin which is libelled in the comparison to peach or plum. She had it, too, combined with a rare type of colouring. Under dark brown hair and brows was the deep blue eye that goes only with dark hair, and her cheek was a mixture of two complexions, soft as the blonde, rich as the brown.

Her long neck rose clear from the low corsage, showing that slope of the shoulders which was then accounted the final perfection of beauty—and it had the whiteness of milk. Yet now there was an angry red through it, and her cheeks burned. A dispassionate observer would have deplored the sullen droop at the corner of her mouth. As she faced her father it was obduracy pitted against fierceness.

Her father however for the moment took no note of her, but addressed himself to his wife. "What is the meaning of this, Mrs. Nesbit?" he said. "Did I not send word to you to dress yourself and come down?"

"Oh, James," the poor lady cried, tremulously clasping her hands, "I thought it must be some joke. Surely you could not ask Isabel and me to do such a thing."

"And why not, madam? Because you put an affront on your company this morning, is that a reason you should not show respect to my guests now?"

"You may see for yourself, sir," said Isabella angrily, "that my mother is not fit to come down. And if she were, it would be no place for ladies among the drunken riff-raff you have with you."

Mr. Nesbit looked her up and down with a grim smile. "So, madam. These are the fine manners you have brought back with you. Your father's guests are not good enough to associate with." He paused for a moment, as the girl stood before him in lowering silence. "But I am glad to see," he went on, "that you at least have had the sense to dress yourself in a becoming fashion." Then, turning to his wife, "Put on your clothes at once, Mrs. Nesbit," he commanded.

Timorously, as if obeying a mechanical impulse too strong for her to resist, the gentle little lady went over to her wardrobe and began confusedly to open drawers, the tears streaming from her eyes, sobs shaking her. But the girl maintained her obstinate attitude.

"My mother may do as she likes, sir," she said. "I refuse to go down. There is no reason why we should be subjected to this indignity."

Mr. Nesbit bowed ironically. "Madam," he said, "with all deference to your judgment, there is the best of reasons. Mr. Maxwell, whom you are to marry, is below, and it is proper that you should be presented to him before the ceremony."

Mrs. Nesbit gave a little gasping cry, dropping the robe that was in her hands. Hurrying with uncertain feet across the room, she fell on her knees before her husband. "Oh James," she cried, "you cannot mean this."

Isabella remained motionless, but a flush of crimson spread over her neck and brow. "This is some drunken folly," she said in a tone of bitter scorn. "Sir, it is painful to my mother that you should expose yourself thus."

Mr. Nesbit started as if he had received a blow in the face. For an instant it seemed as if he would leap at the girl. His hands clenched

themselves, while his wife clung about his knees. Then mastering himself he spoke with a terrible voice. "Rise up, Mrs. Nesbit. You have heard your daughter accuse her father of drunkenness."

"Oh James, don't mind her," cried the woman between her sobs; "she doesn't know what she is saying."

Her husband helped her to rise and with some gentleness seated her in a chair. Then, turning to the girl, "This matter must be made clear. You are aware, miss," he said to her sternly, "that your sister has broken her engagement to Maxwell. I stand, therefore, in his debt and there is only one means for me to acquit it. I have made this proposal to him publicly, he has publicly accepted it; the settlements are even now being prepared, and where the family honour is concerned, your personal inclinations cannot be considered."

Isabella drew herself up, a statue of wrath. "Family honour!" she cried. "You mean the family mortgage. You may well talk of debt. You owe him the money that has been squandered here in building this house, and I am to be sacrificed to pay for it."

Mrs. Nesbit stretched out her arms towards her daughter. "Isabel dear," she said faintly, "Jack Maxwell is a good boy, and a kind boy, and he will make you a good husband."

"Thank you, madam," returned her daughter disdainfully. "I have other prospects than to take up with Mary's leavings." Then she turned to her father. "My last word, sir, is that I will neither marry this young cub, nor speak to him, nor see him."

"Enough of this, child," said her father, coldly. Then to his wife he added, "Mrs. Nesbit, you have ten minutes in which to prepare yourself and your daughter." And with that he walked out of the room.

## CHAPTER XII.

MEANWHILE, down-stairs, the atmosphere had changed. Men had seen Nesbit defied, and they had lost their fear of him. Laughter was now unrestrained, wagers flew from mouth to mouth. "Two to one she refuses."—"An even hundred Maxwell does not get her." And when Nesbit entered again, he was greeted with noisy enquiries.

Jack too felt the same uncertainty, and it roused in him a fury of opposition. There was Dean Vigors smiling and deprecating; there was Lambert grinning and whispering. By heaven, he would have her.

"Well, sir?" he asked as Mr. Nesbit seated himself at the head of his table; and the question was echoed through the room, with amplifications, "When shall we see the beauty?"—"When is Maxwell to know his fate?"

The master of Douros saw what was before him; he felt his ascendancy challenged. But he knew well the ways of drunkenness and was determined to enlist on his side all the recklessness of a drunken frolic. Taking out his watch, and looking at it, he laid it before him. "Restrain your impatience, gentlemen," he said; "you have yet eight minutes and a half to wait. Send along the bottle, there is full time for a couple of rounds, and I will be your time-keeper."

A shout of applause greeted his proposal; the wine passed, fresh bottles were opened. Mr. Nesbit, at the end of the table, leaning forward cheered on the drinkers, exhorted the sleepers to rouse themselves, exhorted the others to rouse them. And minute by minute, he called out the time. Five minutes! Mr. Macrae's fumbling fingers had to be helped to fasten a loosened stock, that he might

be fit to face the ladies. Four minutes. Gradually the sleep was being rubbed out of drunken eyes. Three minutes, two minutes. Every man was now tolerably erect on his seat, and the contagion of excitement spread, as the host, rising, cried, "Are we all ready? Then, gentlemen, a last bumper, and standing."

Not one of them but struggled somehow to his feet. And when Mr. Nesbit, raising his glass, and giving the toast, "Success to the bridegroom," drained his glass and flung it to shiver on the floor, his example was followed with wild cheers,—in which a note of mockery might easily be distinguished.

Mr. Nesbit took up his watch and looked at it. "Time's up, gentlemen! Now, if you please we will join the ladies. Your arm, Jack."

Solemnly, like performers in a play, the pair marched down the long room, Jack's knees wavering under him, Mr. Nesbit's tread firm as ever. Solemnly they opened the door, solemnly they crossed the hall, while at their heels the disorderly rout came tumbling. Mr. Nesbit threw the drawing-room door wide. The vast room was empty and silent in the light of evening.

Turning on his heel, while Jack still gazed confusedly into the vacant saloon, he fronted the mob of men, the last of whom was still stumbling out of the other door.

"Gentlemen," he cried, "we must seek the ladies in their own apartment. Follow me."

And, quick as a boy, he ran across the stone flags and up the white stair; the company with a common impulse rushed jostlingly after him. Major Pearse raised a view-halloo, the rest caught it up and "Yoicks forrard—stole away—stole away!" went roaring and ringing through the galleries. Jack was close at Mr. Nesbit's heels;

the Dean decorously brought up the rear of the procession.

Reaching the top of the stair, Mr. Nesbit tried the door. It was locked. Without an instant's hesitation, "Break that in for me," he cried. And as he spoke he pointed to an instrument,—the long oak settle standing in the south gallery.

The child's instinct for destruction is strong in the drunken. Instantly as many hands as could find room seized the improvised ram.

"Lord," cried Major Pearse, "I wouldn't have missed this for a hundred. All together, boys!"

There was a rush of feet, a crash, a scream from within, the splintering of wood, and the door burst from its hinges. The drunken crew, following their ram, tumbled headlong into the room—Jack in the midst of them, cheering with the loudest. He was now mad drunk; the stimulus of physical violence acting on his over-excited nerves had galvanised the powers of his body at the cost of his brain.

There was a hush for a moment. Mrs. Nesbit lay swooning in her chair; Isabella stood beside her with flaming eyes. Then rage overmastered the proud girl and she marched on them with out-swung arm, pointing to the door.

"Out with you, you drunken sots! What do you mean by this outrage? Out, I say!"

For an instant they were cowed. Then Mr. Nesbit, pushing his way through the pack, came forward. "Silence, madam!" he cried. "What authority have you to bar doors against me in this house?"

The life-long ascendancy reasserted itself. Isabella would have faced the mob and beaten it. To her father alone she might have opposed a dogged resistance. But the cold imperious voice and impassive bearing of this



despot, succeeding to the fierce shock of the crashing door and the inrush, mastered her, and she shrank back to her mother's side.

Mr. Nesbit stepped over to his wife and laid his hand on her arm, yet not roughly. "Rouse yourself, Mrs. Nesbit," he said.

Even in her swoon the poor lady's nerves answered to that summons. Slowly and tremulously she sat up, her beautiful face discomposed, her soft hair ruffled.

Tongues were unloosed in the group by the door. Jack found himself thrust to the front with laughter. "Don't be hiding now." "By God, Maxwell, you're the bold man. She'll put the fear of God into you." "She's a virago, Jack my boy. Better cry off."

But in Jack's drunken mind one idea was paramount. "That's the woman I'm going to marry," he stutted. "Lambert sha'n't have her. Where's Lambert? He's afraid to fight. Lambert sha'n't have her."

Mr. Nesbit was assisting his wife to rise. "Stand up, if you please, madam," he commanded. The poor lady caught at her daughter's arm, and Isabella felt to a shudder all the contagion of her fear. She tried to shake her arm free, but Mrs. Nesbit clung to it.

"Do what he bids you, my dear," she whispered, "it's the only way."

Mr. Nesbit crossed the room and taking Jack by the hand, led him across to the girl. Jack surveyed her with the unseeing stare of the drunken, and said no word.

"This is Mr. Maxwell," Mr. Nesbit said, "whom your sister has so vilely abused. You are to marry him."

Isabella's mouth drew down at the corners. "I will not marry him," she cried, raising her voice, and shaking herself clear of her mother's arm. "I refuse," she repeated, with a bold gesture. "Dean Vigors, you are a

gentleman at least, and not a savage; I appeal to you."

The Dean reeled forward, with a benign leer. "Madam," he said, with hazy utterance, "you place me in a most difficult position."

"I refuse, sir," she cried again. "You understand. I refuse to marry him. I would sooner marry any bumpkin in this drunken rabble."

The words struck to Jack's dim apprehension. "She shall marry me, Mr. Dean," he cried, with flushed face. "She sha'n't marry Lambert. I came here to be married, and she shall marry me."

Drunken cheers of derision burst from the group of men. "That's the way, Maxwell." "Stick to her." "By God, you'll get a wife yet, one way or the other."

Mr. Nesbit's thin lips met tighter. "Have you a prayer-book, Vigors? There's one on that table. We may begin at once."

The Dean stumbled cautiously over towards the part of the room which Mr. Nesbit indicated. "At your service, sir," he said. But as he passed Isabella rushed swiftly to him and caught his arm. "I refuse to be married, sir!" she said fiercely. "You do this at your peril. I have friends as you know. Lady Dunganon will not desert me. I refuse, and you do this at your peril."

The Dean hesitated. Even in his cups, the name of a peeress was not to be disregarded. Mr. Nesbit saw his uncertainty. "Wait a moment, sir," he said. Then going to his daughter's side he caught her by her wrist, and drew her after him to the dressing-room. "Come with us, Mrs. Nesbit," he said imperiously to his wife, and she followed, sobbing.

Then, as he closed the door, and found himself alone with the two women, he let go the girl's arm, but glared fiercely in her face. "You

refuse to be married. Very well. Here is your mother who will tell you that there are circumstances in which a woman may change her mind on that matter."

As he spoke these words, Mrs. Nesbit sank in a heap on the floor, covering her face with her hands, "Spare me, James," she sobbed. "Spare me before my child. Oh, Isabel, do what he bids you."

But her husband disregarded her sobs, and still maintained his sinister gaze on his daughter. "Your mother will tell you, Isabel, that you may find yourself glad enough to get the name of Mrs. Maxwell."

"What do you mean, sir?" retorted the girl uneasily, cowed by her mother's terror, and the savage mockery in her father's face.

"I mean that Jack Maxwell is entitled to a wife out of this house to-day, and if she will not come by consent, he may take her by force. These gentlemen that you have been miscalling will be quick enough to lend a hand. And then, how will your fine friends like it if they learn you had to go on your knees to him to marry you? Ask your mother, I say."

Mrs. Nesbit sobbed and moaned. "Oh, James, you would not let them do it."

"Would not, madam? I have given my word to Jack Maxwell and he shall take his own way. If he takes her," and he stopped to fix his eyes again in bitter mockery on Isabella, "why then, I promise you, Isabel, I will see to it that he shall make your condition as honourable as it may be. But hinder him, I will not,—and I could not if I wanted to," he added, in a tone less menacing, more persuasive. "You see yourself the crew he has with him; they were mad before, but now with the affronts you have put on them, God Almighty

would not hold them. Now, madam," he continued, "make your choice at once. Will you be married here and now, under your father's roof by a distinguished clergyman, or will you take your chance of finding some couple-beggar when you are only too glad to get him?"

A passion of fierce unnatural sobbing shook the girl. Tears did not come to her, though her eyes swelled. She was beaten at last. Her mother flung gentle arms about her.

"Isabel, Isabel darling, do as he bids you. You'll have a good husband and a good estate."

The girl's attitude showed her surrender. Mr. Nesbit threw the door open. Broken and sullen she let herself be dragged back into the other room.

A cheer greeted her appearance.

"My daughter is now in a better frame of mind. Make quick work, Vigors," said Mr. Nesbit. "There has been too much delay. Come, Jack."

The drunken bridegroom took his place at the right of the bride, who stood with eyes hidden while her father kept his pressure on her wrist. The drunken divine, with his back to the window, stumbled through the service.

Isabella's consent was given by a scowling silence. When it came to the giving of the ring, Jack suddenly flushed. "I lost it," he said. Mr. Nesbit quickly spied on the bridegroom's finger a small hoop set with diamonds—it had belonged to his mother. It was torn off hurriedly and put into his hand; and then for the first time Jack's hot fingers touched the bride. She drew her hand away from the contact with a swift motion of disgust.

Dean Vigors sought to end the ceremony with a facetious address,

but Mr. Nesbit cut him short. Then, turning to the company, "Gentlemen," he said, "it has been a day of some fatigue. The young couple have earned their repose. Mrs. Nesbit, you will prepare your daughter to retire, while we drink their health downstairs in a parting cup." The Dean continued his exhortation to Jack in private.

*(To be continued.)*

### THE YOUTH OF FEAR.

I saw a scoundrel impotently base  
Whose mask had fallen between us on the ground,  
And in the pride of judgement saw our race  
File past him with contempt too felt for sound.

He did not speak; a sudden scorching wind  
Dried up an eloquence of fair repute.  
His lips pulsated, hinting "I have sinned,"  
While all the alphabets in him were mute

And then I saw him human, and his past,  
Blown like a bubble from his puckered mouth,  
Burst in the air. Almost I was aghast  
For fear had made him younger than a youth.

Methought I saw—as in thought's interplay  
Hints of a likeness in unlikeness gleam—  
Lips, ignorant of any speech, obey  
The dictates of a babe's first foolish dream.

W. H. CHESSEX.

## THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FIGHTING POWER.

THE formation of a supreme Council of Defence recently announced by the Prime Minister sets the key-stone in the arch of our naval and military system, which for so long, under pressure of public opinion, has been in process of evolution, and furnishes a striking instance of the power of adaptability inherent in all living organisms. It is in itself the best possible proof that the Empire has not yet reached the zenith of its power.

Owing to the long immunity from European warfare that we have enjoyed, and the small numerical proportion which our fighting forces have borne to the population of the whole nation, until quite recent years the idea of "war," as statesmen upon the continent have been compelled to conceive it, (that is to say as a struggle for the survival of the fittest) has found no place in our political economy, and our views as to the functions of armies and navies remain very much where they were in Europe before Napoleon taught the Continent the lesson of their true value. Our soldiers and sailors view fleets and armies as means to the winning of *victories*, but the statesman must see in them primarily the means of *averting war*, and to estimate their power to avert this calamity needs a wider outlook than the present training of the services affords.

This point of view has been thoroughly grasped by some at least of our possible enemies, who recognise in every debate and ministerial utterance the want of co-ordination between the navy, the army and the

civil departments, and see therein the real point of our weakness. They realise to the full our potential resources, but decline to believe that, without previous national study of the conditions of civil existence which a state of war must involve, our statesmen will be able to meet the many emergencies as they arise; and not till it becomes evident to them that these problems have received full and fitting attention, shall we cease to invite attack.

But as recent events have only too clearly shown, even councils of defence need public opinion behind them, and it is in the hope of familiarising the country with the nature of the work which must engage the most earnest attention of the new creation, that the following pages have been prepared.

In the event of our becoming involved in a great European conflict, (a struggle for the survival of the fittest among the nations) our chief danger lies in the wide-spread ignorance of our potential fighting strength and the relative weakness of our possible enemies. This ignorance is deplorable but it is the necessary outcome of the conditions under which we live, and rightly considered shows a strong vitality in the national organism, for without the vivid interest in our defences, indicated by the ceaseless storm of criticism to which every detail of our organisations is subjected, all hope of healthy progress would have to be abandoned. The phenomenon is common to all nations, only it happens that as a consequence of our previous history and our

geographical position we have difficulties of our own to contend with which are or have been absent in other cases. Of all civilised races, we alone have had no recent experience of what warfare within our own frontiers really signifies. Not only have we escaped invasion—the memory of which is after all growing dim even in Germany—but because of the gradual differentiation of a fighting caste from the bulk of the population, which began some centuries ago and has only been slightly modified by the return to short service conditions, the manhood of the nation has no personal experience of the conditions under which war is waged, and altogether fails to appreciate the strain which even victorious operations entail upon the victors.

After the Franco-German war there was hardly an able-bodied man in Germany who had not learnt by experience what the crisis of a great battle really signifies, and could not realise the consequences which a want of resolution in the directing minds, or even an infinitesimal diminution in the endurance and discipline of the rank and file might have entailed. With us this knowledge is almost entirely lacking. From our conduct during the so-called "black week" in December, 1899, from the mere fact that three in themselves unimportant outpost incidents (for, relatively to the scale of modern warfare, that is all they amounted to) were accepted as a national humiliation, one hesitates to predict our bearing under the far more severe strains that a great European war must inevitably bring with it.

It has been said that the recent war has greatly increased our prestige abroad; Mr. Stead and the pro-Boers have vigorously contested the statement. The truth as usual lies somewhere between the two extremes—

rather nearer if anything to the first. No foreign War Office questions the restraining influence exercised by our navy, though the Fashoda incident really brought home the lesson, and the adaptability of our army organisation to meet even a far greater strain, an adaptability greatly in excess of that with which it was previously credited, is also admitted; but the actual tactical conduct of operations has revealed weaknesses (well understood in all countries, for they have been through the same mill themselves), and the conduct of the civil population and its readiness to condemn every general officer, and to stigmatise as "disasters" the mishaps unavoidable in any campaign, have raised doubts in their minds as to our tenacity in adversity, which are by no means favourable for the maintenance of peace. While one is compelled to accept the correctness of their conclusions from the evidence with which our newspapers have supplied them, I submit that there are many substantial facts in the situation viewed as a whole which deserve more correct appreciation on both sides of the water before a final opinion can be arrived at, and, since military history furnishes conclusive proof that a false conception of a nation's power of resistance has been at the bottom of most resolutions to disturb existing peaceful relations,<sup>1</sup> I consider that public interests will be well served at the present juncture by calling attention to the most important of these forgotten factors.

<sup>1</sup> The latest example of this is furnished by the letters of P. S. in the *MORNING POST* and by various Boer documents. No one who has studied these documents and compared them with the utterances of our own irresponsible statesmen and Press can doubt that but for the entirely fictitious estimate of our power derived from these sources, the peace of South Africa would never have been disturbed.

Between nations of apparently equal fighting strength victory has always inclined ultimately to the race which united the highest standard of honesty and duty with individual intelligence and initiative, these factors being combined to give the greatest product, for intelligence and initiative without honesty will not suffice, and without a sense of national duty both are barren.

Compared with the three most formidable rivals which under certain circumstances might conceivably combine against us, how do we stand?

I will take the individual qualities first. No one who has encountered the sailors, colonists or raw recruits of all four nations will hesitate to award us the palm. Our merchant-seaman may be often drunken and difficult to manage, but I have never met a captain who does not prefer him in a tight corner; for the fitness of the Englishman as a colonist the Empire is there to speak for itself; and as the raw material for making soldiers (in which term I include blue-jackets) after most careful study of both the French and German armies, I consider our men by far the easiest to train. The Russians we may leave out of the question; in a country where some ninety-three per cent. of selected recruits are entirely illiterate intelligence and initiative are not to be ranked high.

The sense of national duty taken as a whole and viewed from the military stand-point only is more difficult to gauge. The Germans undoubtedly head the list, for, roughly, 200,000 men leave the colours annually with a thorough training in its practical signification, and the total number in the Fatherland who have been through this course cannot fall far short of six million men. There are at the present moment about four million men under forty-five years of

age who are trained soldiers. Of men who have actually been through the ranks of the navy or army in England there are about one million only, but including ex-militiamen and volunteers who have at least received a rudimentary grounding in the military conception of duty, the numbers cannot fall far short of four millions, since for the last thirty years we have been enrolling annually, under one head or the other, almost as large a proportion of our population as the French and Germans,<sup>1</sup> and though the discipline in this somewhat heterogeneous force must average lower, it is probable that the sense of duty, being voluntarily rendered, is higher and suffers less deterioration from discontent.

Further,—and this is a very important point consistently over-looked by all advocates of conscription at home and abroad—whereas in Germany, France and Russia the pick of the population is taken, leaving the residue without the moral training and physical development, which would accrue to them in the ranks, to be crushed under in the struggle for existence in civil life (hence Socialism with all its evils) our system, which does not select the fittest exactly, does afford an opportunity to many who would otherwise sink into the “submerged tenth” to raise themselves up to and beyond the level of the average wage earner, as the following figures taken from a War Office return, called for by Mr. Arnold Foster and dated July 30th, 1898, sufficiently prove:

In December, 1897, there were in Class I. Army Reserve about 81,800 men. Of these there were in receipt of relief

<sup>1</sup> Before the war the average enrolments were in round numbers Navy 20,000, Regular Army 40,000, Militia 80,000, and Volunteers 60,000. Total 150,000 out of 40 millions against 200,000 out of 56 millions.



320 in all, or 1 in 256, but 117 could not prove that they were reservists, and were probably men discharged without character by court-martial sentence, &c. At the same date there were known to be about 80,224 pensioners, of whom 1905, or 1 in 42, were in receipt of relief. Of these 231 were doubtful. Exclusive of reserve men, pensioners, and deserters, there were at the same date 407,784 men who had served in the army, and of these 6,662 were in receipt of relief, or 1 in 61; but of these no less than 5,333 could not prove that they had been in the service. The total number of reserve men and discharged soldiers was 569,758, and of these only 8,242 in receipt of relief could prove their connection with the army, or 1 in 176. Of the whole male population of the United Kingdom over 20 years of age (excluding soldiers and ex-soldiers, but not counting deserters as such), estimated at 9,907,000, 1 in 45 was in receipt of relief, and of the industrial population, 1 in 37.

Probably the best test as to the value of the sense of duty in England, Germany and France (I omit Russia as beyond power of analysis) will be found in the relative danger to existing orders of society to be feared from the Socialists and Anarchists. Judged by this scale England must easily stand first, for even if we include Trades Unionists in this category (against which most of themselves would be the first to protest) Socialism with us is practically a negligible quantity.

Of international honesty it is more difficult to speak; a fair test however exists in the ratio of coin required in the several countries to carry on internal trade. According to Mulhall's *WEALTH OF NATIONS* (1896) the figures stand thus.

	Millions sterling.		Ratio of	
	Trade.	Money.	Money.	
United Kingdom	1,619	... 150	...	9.4
Canada ...	205	... 13	...	6.5
Australia ...	177	... 34	...	19.2
Germany ...	1,353	... 288	...	17.6
France ...	1,201	... 467	...	39.0
Russia ...	... Not quoted			

No. 523.—VOL. LXXXVIII.

These figures can hardly be taken as an absolute measure of the integrity of the individuals of each race, for intelligence and business experience must obviously account for much of the growth of facilities for commerce which has rendered it possible for each sovereign to do so much work, facilities which might be almost entirely destroyed by panic terror at the outbreak of war. But, if such panic can be averted by educating the people to understand our position and prospects in the event of war, these statistics furnish, in conjunction with our great wealth in property and freedom from debt, conclusive proof of our power to bear the strain of hostilities for a far longer period than any of our possible opponents.

The functions of a fly-wheel in steam machinery are well known. Briefly stated, its purpose is to store up energy as in a reservoir to meet the changing demands on the engine, and the engineer does not grudge the power needed to set it in motion in the first instance. Rightly understood, the national debt is to the machinery of the State as the fly-wheel to the steam engine; if it has been suitably proportioned to its task it guarantees the country against the shocks and jars of commercial panic, and carries it over the dead points resulting from endless changes in international affairs by alternately absorbing and giving out money rendered temporarily superfluous in other channels. When war suddenly breaks out a tremendous disturbance of commercial credit immediately arises. Money is thrown out of profitable employment, but, provided the ultimate prospects for the State are good, that is to say, that the fly-wheel has been suitably designed, the State offers the best guarantee for the *bona fide* investor and absorbs his money to redistribute it amongst all

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those of the working classes who are directly or indirectly concerned in the defence of the country. If our organisation for war is adequate and sound in principle, then, though there will be a great disruption of the channels in which money normally flows, what is set free in one quarter will be taken up in another, and the total amount of coin circulating in the country will be available for commercial operations as before, until, when peace supervenes, the direction of the current is reversed and normal pursuits are resumed, the actual expenditure of the State being made good by the acquisition of fresh areas for trade, by increased prestige with better credit and so forth.

It is curious that though this cycle of events was well understood in the case of besieged fortresses and formed in effect the substance of the secret instructions for finance usually issued to their governors<sup>1</sup> the idea has never been applied to the wider question of nations as a whole.

For generations we have been taught to consider our national debt simply in the light of an incubus on industry and progress, whereas rightly considered it is merely the price we have given for the purchase of trading facilities which have repaid their cost many times over, and the balance of debt at any moment remaining unpaid should be regarded as the invisible foundation of our national stability.

When a doubt arises as to the

stability of an architectural structure, engineers and architects are usually called in to investigate its foundations and possible panic is often averted by timely recourse to this precautionary measure. May not the analogy hold good with our national institutions? I believe it may, and though such a task is beyond the limitations of individual strength, I will venture to suggest certain lines of enquiry which it will be profitable for the country to follow up.

The prime guarantee for the stability of the nation is an overpowering navy. Let us see how far our expenditure in the past has contributed to this end. The acquisition of our colonies has dotted the ocean for us with docks and coaling stations in numbers to which no other nation or probable coalition of nations can at present approach, and, apart from the obvious strategical advantages their possession affords us on which it is presumably unnecessary to dwell, these possessions have the further advantage of making every sovereign spent in naval construction and armament go further in securing fighting value than equal sums spent in foreign countries. A battleship is not a thing which, under all circumstances, possesses an equal fighting value, as those critics who base their jeremiads on mere numerical returns would have us believe, but requires facilities for coaling, docking, etc., only to be found in suitably equipped harbours, and a nation attempting to build ships against us has to sink a disproportionate amount of capital in the provision of these facilities.

Let anyone take the charts of the Baltic and German coasts and supplement them by the information obtainable from geological surveys and then estimate for the cost of the dockyards both in construction and maintenance (maintenance will before long

<sup>1</sup> Compare the instructions of Frederick the Great to his Fortress Commandants. In substance he says: As soon as the place is invested invite the richest merchants to contribute to a loan, pointing out that the money will be expended in pay to the inhabitants and garrison who must purchase their necessities through the usual channels. Thus the coin will find its way back to their hands in a very short time, and then you can call on them for a further loan and so on, the State settling up on the conclusion of hostilities.

prove an important factor) required to place each Russian or German ship on an equality with our own. Merely on the ground of home facilities alone I imagine that the result will astonish him, and though the Germans with an equal standard of commercial morality have a slight advantage in cheapness of labour, the amount is not sufficient to make up for the balance of natural drawbacks under which they labour. France is under more favourable natural conditions, but against this the cost of ship construction is thirty per cent. higher, and all the money voted does not find its way to its intended destination. In Russia all these drawbacks are more pronounced.

But this by no means exhausts the advantages we purchased by our national debt. Practically it secured for us the command of the seas, and this, so long as we strike hard and *first*, carries with it an enormous access to our offensive strength. Our colliers can roam the seas almost without fear of molestation and the lee side of every island, I might even say of every sandbank, gives us a mobile base where we can coal at our convenience. Hence, provided we assert the initiative and keep it, we can always at a critical point rely on a higher rate of speed in our ships and our enemy can never count on our actual striking radius.

Now let anyone play for himself a naval war-game on the Jane system and see whither this leads him. The gain is precisely identical in quality with that which gave De Wet his ubiquity in the recent war and compelled us to employ 350,000 men to hunt down 50,000 Boers. No one could believe until he has tried it, even on paper, the advantage the knowledge of full bunkers confers on the fortunate possessor. In the open sea he can hang on the enemy's flanks for

days till he knows his time has come and then practically dictate his own terms. If in the future we succeed in introducing oil fuel the advantage of the mobile base remains ours, and is indeed intensified, provided our intelligence department is properly served.

Taking these known advantages as a basis let us consider the distribution of our enemies' ships and their readiness for war. As regards Germany we can assume an equal degree of preparation, but Fashoda showed the difference between English and French dockyard efficiency, and in Russia matters are known to be worse. Making reasonable deductions under these headings then with a map of Europe before us let us endeavour to effect a concentration of these several fleets. Until the introduction of wireless telegraphy the possession of land lines secure against all interruption was a point of enormous value to a coalition, for fog or other causes might prevent timely communication with our fleets at sea, but Marconi's discovery has altered all this in our favour and I cannot bring myself to believe that our Admiralty is not capable of devising a scheme to defeat our enemies' ends. Let the critics again refer to the charts of the Baltic and Elbe and endeavour to extricate a fleet of battleships from those tortuous channels in face of even our destroyers. The enemy uses either the Ship Canal or the Skager Rack or both. In the one case he must debouch in a single column and run the risk of defeat in detail; in the other he must divide his forces, with, strategically, equally disastrous results. Or if we take the Dardanelles, who would care to run the gauntlet of our destroyers lying in wait behind the Greek Islands from Gallipoli to Crete?

Let us however assume the worst, and imagine our ships everywhere out-

numbered by our enemies. How many of our adversaries would be fit for action again within six months of a general engagement? Ships are not like army corps which can take part in a battle to-day and if victorious fight again to-morrow in even better form; their damages take months to repair, and here our superior docking facilities would stand us in good stead. Meanwhile in the relative absence of fighting ships every merchant vessel becomes a potential blockader; her bows and a towing torpedo in default of better means will prove sufficiently destructive, and here our superior numbers would soon begin to tell.

The end of such a struggle I submit cannot be doubtful. It means three European powers, with widely divergent interests and impaired credit, against the rest of a world united by the two strongest cements, identity of commercial interests and the ocean. Our sufferings would be the hardest at the beginning of the war but theirs would soon overtake ours, for all three nations are in this dilemma; either they mobilise all their forces at once, in which case the estimated cost of one million sterling each per diem would soon bring the strongest to bankruptcy; or by calling up their coast line army corps and the *inscription maritime* they disorganise the whole balance of internal commerce, thus making each corps district a focus of discontent. With the rich tradesman in the mobilised districts complaining of want of hands and the poor in the unmobilised ones of want of employment, then would come the opportunity of the Socialists and Anarchists.

But "battleships cannot climb hills," as the Sultan of Turkey sagely remarked on the occasion of the Dulcigno affair, and under the stress of our inevitable sufferings the temper

of our people would soon rise to flashing point. They would demand a great effort, or even a series of efforts to bring our foes to their knees, and it is to meet this demand that our Army must be organised. It will be no "three army corps" expedition that will be required, but a force capable of meeting at least one great Continental army on its own grounds, and under the pressure of necessity the recruits will soon be forthcoming; indeed we shall have to form such an army simply as a council of expediency, to relieve the pressure on the labour market which must result from the cessation of all private undertaking.

Into the details of such an organisation I have no space to enter but the following figures deserve to be borne in mind. Given a law of conscription on the same lines as that in force in France, our fighting force would amount in round numbers to four million men, in other words there must be not less than that number of able bodied-men in this country between the ages of twenty and forty-five.

Exclusive of the Regular Army and its reserves, according to the War Office return quoted above, there were in the country at the time 569,000 men who had served in the Regular Army, of whom 80,000 were pensioners, and the rest men still under forty-five years of age who had enlisted since the introduction of short service. The Volunteers have been passing about 60,000 a year through their ranks for at least a generation, and, making all reasonable deductions, there must therefore be about one and a half million of them in the country. The militia is more difficult to estimate, but it may safely be taken as good for at least 100,000 more. We have therefore out of four million men rather more

than half that number who have undergone some military training—training at any rate far in advance of what was available in the United States during their great Civil War. If therefore the Federal Government managed in two years to raise and equip, under far less serious pressure, some two millions of the hardest fighting men the world has ever seen (compare the casualty lists of their principal battles with those of any army in the world, our own included) can there be any reasonable cause to question our ability under a sterner necessity to equal their achievement, and can any serious student of military history entertain a doubt as to the influence the existence of these two million bayonets, backed by an unassailable supremacy at sea, would exert on a coalition riven by all the consequences two years of war must inevitably entail? For myself I doubt very much whether a single one of these bayonets would ever be called upon to cross the Channel at all.

As to whether the men would come forward the reply is that they would not be free agents; hunger would compel them. If in the recent troubles more than 100,000 came forward voluntarily in one year without any appreciable disorganisation of the labour market to favour such action, how many will come when for the time being the army is the only refuge for the homeless and starving? The history of the raising of the French revolutionary armies in 1793-4 and of the Germans in 1813, which is too little studied in this country, supplies the answer. Even our own performance in 1803, (over 500,000 under arms out of a population of ten millions) shows that such an effort is not beyond our power.

Our enemies however possess one

marked advantage which it would be well for us to realise. Each of the three nations knows what war means by ages of tradition and by relatively recent experience, and their leaders and administrations know what steps to take and when to take them. Our population is wholly ignorant of these matters and, when even a small emergency, such as the recent war, arises, our statesmen appeal for guidance to the man in the street. Still their instincts proved sound if their knowledge was lacking and no one of any eminence counselled "surrender." But how will it be when an angry mob is surging up Whitehall? Will they have the resolution to oppose the only possible barrier?

The better plan would be to study the question in peace and mature the steps which can be taken to prevent these crowds arising. They are not numerous, expensive or intricate—they merely imply the recognition of the ultimate facts that "individual suffering is not cumulative" and what was possible in besieged cities of the past is possible, thanks to development of communications, in the partly invested island of the future. Half a dozen Indian Civilians with Famine Relief experience could fill in the details, but a special department needs to be created to deal with these questions, since at present neither War Office nor Admiralty nor Home Office admits its responsibility. Meanwhile each individual can do good service by analysing his own position in the event of war and the consequences "surrender" would entail, and estimating where in the following generalisation his position would come in.

The cost of the war and indemnity cannot reasonably be taken at less than two thousand millions which we should not be able to raise at two and a half per cent exactly. The charge

for interest alone even on half that sum would tax all industrial profits out of existence, with the consequence that upwards of six millions of working men would be thrown out of employment, for such capital as remained would take wings to more favourable climates; what would become of these six millions and their dependants? The history of Ireland supplies part but only part of the answer, for now there are no longer undeveloped districts willing to receive a flood of paupers. They could not enter the United States or Australia, and how long would Canada and the Cape consent to endure the conditions this avalanche of cheap labour would create?

It is possible that, if our enemies were orthodox free traders, they might hesitate before they killed the goose with the golden eggs; but such foresight has never yet distinguished any of the three powers in their dealings with a conquered territory, and it is extremely unlikely that they will be suddenly converted to the doctrine of the Manchester School in the full flush of their long desired success.

More probably they would prefer to share the trade of the world, temporarily diminished by the British fraction, among themselves, rather than the half of that trade which at present is about all that we leave to them.

They may calculate that our capital and labour driven to other countries will soon create fresh demands for the commodities, which freed from our competition they alone will be in a position to supply; for our maritime resources, both for war and commerce will pass to the victors, and with them they will be strong enough to deal with American competition in any way that may suit their convenience.

It is a gloomy picture, but one at which we should do well to look; for I am convinced that once the true consequences of "surrender" are realised by the nation, the "driving force" necessary to carry our fleets and armies to victory will be automatically evolved, and—given that force—then we need fear no possible coalition.

F. N. MAUDE,

*Lt.-Col., late Royal Engineers.*



## SEVILLE CATHEDRAL.

THE largest of all Gothic churches, and indeed, after St. Peter's at Rome, the largest church in Christendom, Seville Cathedral during recent years has practically been closed. In 1888, as the result of a series of earthquake shocks, the dome fell in with a mighty crash, every precious object below, from the east end of the choir to the screen of the *capilla mayor*, or high altar, being inevitably destroyed, and the pavement was covered by a vast mass of confused masonry. On a former visit to Seville I had been unable to obtain any conception of the interior, for although one could penetrate at certain points the way was blocked in every direction and no vista left open. Now, the cathedral has been really opened; the ceremonies of Holy Week are no longer robbed of their splendour, and the remains of Columbus have found a last resting-place in the city which has the best right to claim them. Fortunately it is possible to compliment the Sevillians on their skill in church restoration. Whatever views one may hold on restoration, here certainly was a case where everyone must admit its necessity, and this inevitable restoration has been accomplished in the most judicious manner possible. The fine taste of the Sevillians, and the conservatism natural to all Spaniards, have here at all events been happily united; nothing has been done that was not absolutely necessary to preserve the harmony of the edifice, and no foolish attempt has been made either to extend the operations beyond the field of damage

or to do anything better than the original builders.

It was a fitting time to inaugurate afresh this great centre of Christian worship. It is five hundred years since Seville Cathedral was planned. In 1401 the Chapter resolved to build a basilica "so magnificent that coming ages should call them mad for attempting it." The cathedral was planned by foreign architects, possibly German, who took a century to complete the work, though externally some of the portals are not completed even yet. In some respects one may compare it with another Gothic church, the cathedral of Cologne. Each was meant to be stupendous, and each represented an essentially foreign idea, for alike on the banks of the Rhine and in Andalusia, though not everywhere in Germany nor everywhere in Spain, Gothic architecture is an exotic art. It is this exotic character which enabled both churches to preserve their unity of design, and in the case of Cologne even of detail, over a very long period of construction, unaffected by the developments which always modify every living form of architecture in its own home. But with these points of resemblance there could not be a greater contrast. Cologne Cathedral, though in design and on paper it seems to be one of the most perfect and impressive works of man, is in reality to an extreme degree artificial, cold, uninspiring, dead. One feels that in form and in spirit it is utterly alien to the men of the Rhine, and that they have never even attempted

to make it live. Catholicism in Germany has itself a distinctly Protestant character, and Cologne Cathedral, with its French nobility and harmonious logic, is even more foreign to the Rhine than the Renaissance temple of St. Paul's is to foggy Protestant London. But Seville Cathedral is alive, after half a millennium, alive with a full exuberance of life which, it seems to me, can be found in no other great church. To make the vast expanse of St. Peter's alive with worship would be beyond human faculty. And if we turn to a great French and Gothic church, like Notre Dame of Paris, again we feel the lack of life. Cologne and St. Peter's can never have been alive; at Notre Dame the life has departed. Once it may have been filled with splendid ritual; now it is shrunken and cold. Notre Dame has been swept bare by the Revolution and has never quite recovered from the effects of that storm; the very orderliness, elegance, and comfort of the worship now carried on there are an incongruity and indicate an attenuation of the true spirit of worship. But Seville Cathedral is still alive; if less so than once it was, the difference is one which in our time cannot be perceived.

The arrangement of a typical large Spanish church, which we find at Seville in its completely developed form, is unlike that we are familiar with in England and France. The northern Gothic church is shaped like a cross, the eastern arm of which is the most sacred, most filled with light, most exquisitely decorated. All the active functions of the Church are concentrated into the eastern end; here is at once the stage and the orchestra of that great sacred drama which every religious office, and above all the Mass, essentially is. The mystery and solemnity

of divine service are thus secured by distance, by placing the sacred ceremonial in a remote blaze of light, as far away as possible from the worshippers in the body of the church. The worshippers are scattered and isolated, in comparative gloom, throughout the building, an arrangement which probably has its source in the northerner's love of solitude.

Very different is the arrangement in a cathedral like that of Seville. Here the whole object of the very construction of the church is to attain that filling of the edifice with active worship which is in fact so perfectly attained. The building is strictly of a broad oblong shape, without projecting transepts, without more than a rudimentary apse. The choir is almost in the centre of the church, slightly to the west, and the *capilla mayor* containing the high altar is slightly to the east. We may see a somewhat similar arrangement in this respect, though here combined with the cruciform plan of northern Gothic, in Westminster Abbey. Between the choir and the *capilla mayor* is a square space, underneath the dome, which can be enclosed as required and in which some of the most characteristic ceremonies take place, such as the consecration of the holy oil and the washing of feet. Choir and *capilla mayor* are alike massively enclosed and constitute a church within a church. Thus the choral part of the service is completely separated from the ceremonial function, from which it is naturally distinct, and yet the whole actively dramatic movement of the service takes place in the centre of the edifice. The sense of mystery is here attained not by distance but by enclosure and height, and at the same time the conditions are secured for filling the vast edifice with the maximum effect of worship. Such

an arrangement perfectly fits this cathedral for the uses of Spanish ritual; the noble simplicity of the building in its elements of construction, and the boldly flowing rhetoric of its decoration lend themselves admirably to that mysteriously grandiose and romantic quality which is the note of these functions and expresses itself in every detail and every various appeal to the senses.

As the great festivals of the year come round the whole of this vast edifice is not too vast for its part in the functions; it seems to live, to change perpetually with the changes in the rich and varied atmosphere that fills it, the one great and conspicuous object in this city built on a plain, seated broadly and solidly in the midst of the city, as the beauties of Seville know how to seat themselves, alert and robust under the semblance of languor.

Seville Cathedral remains to-day the supreme visible embodiment of the romantic spirit. It was not an accident that Victor Hugo came to Spain in childhood, that it was Spain that aroused his early imagination, and Spain that through all the years of his early literary activity moulded his ideals. In Spain the Middle Ages survive to a greater extent than in any other European country; the fact that all movements, even those of mediæval times, have been late to reach Spain, has favoured this survival. The Spaniards are profoundly conservative; an ecclesiastical organisation is always conservative, and here there has been no social upheaval to disturb that natural conservatism. This great church remains to us, the focus of the ancient religious spirit of Spain, a great vessel full of mystery and romance.

The elements that go to make up the charm of this building are highly complex, even if we disregard the

worship and the worshippers it is so admirably fitted for. I have spent many hours, morning, afternoon, and night during several weeks, within its walls, and at the end it seemed as elusively delightful, as full of novel surprises, as at the first. One learns to detect, however, certain of the elements of the place's charm. It is perfectly lighted; the light is of medium intensity, midway between the clearness of a northern cathedral, which detracts from the sense of mystery, and the extreme and sombre gloom of a typically southern cathedral, like Barcelona or Perpignan, where the obscurity, however impressive it may be, renders all details invisible. The prevailingly medium light in this vast edifice is really made up of a number of kinds of light from many sources, separately of a wide range of intensity, and the atmosphere itself thus becomes here a visible component in the structural harmony of the place. Its varieties of atmospherical effect, its long vistas of light, are produced by various planes of air coming from the doors in every direction, from the veiled and unveiled stained windows at different angles and at different heights, never too dazzling to neutralise altogether the illumination of candles and lamps.

While all the main constructional features of the building are bold and harmoniously planned and proportioned, it has to be confessed that Seville Cathedral is not, and as an exotic phenomenon could not be, a model of exquisite Gothic workmanship in its decorative details, either internally or externally. Anyone who comes fresh to Seville from those great Gothic buildings which arose among a people with a genius for architecture, whether in Amiens and Chartres, or in Barcelona and Tarragona, may easily find cause for offence here. But where the builders

have fallen short in delicate architectural sense, they have made up in their fine artistic felicity, in their instinct for bold and noble proportion; and in the end even the somewhat coarse, peculiar or meaningless decorative detail in the stone, which is, indeed, always restrained and never obtrusive, takes its place as an essential element in the whole effect.

Apart from architecture proper, the decorative feeling becomes right at once. Here, for instance, we see everywhere the bold and splendid iron screens, or *rejas*, which the Sevillians use so frequently, and design with so fine, varied, and happy a decorative feeling. The stained windows, again, are an element in the character of the church; every one of the windows, nearly a hundred in number, is stained, and they are for the most part harmonious, usually in the rich and florid Flemish manner of the seventeenth century which is here entirely in place. These windows are often veiled by semi-transparent curtains, and are generally very highly placed, the clerestory being at a great height, and they are by no means very large. The varied patches of colour which they throw on the walls and piers and pavement, bringing out the crystalline nature of the marble, harmonise happily with the impression of the whole place. All the accessories, moreover, of the cathedral's equipment are on the same scale of harmonious vastness as the edifice itself. The great candles, the bells clanged in the choir at the elevation of the Host, the immense choir-books, the enormous font for the consecrated oil, the huge iron-bound chests to hold the contributions of the faithful, all these and the like accessories are on the same grandiose scale.

While romantic and mysterious

splendour, and a harmonious rhetoric, confidently and happily bold, are the dominant notes of Seville Cathedral, there is yet a certain negligence and familiarity, a certain homeliness, about the splendour that are not the least part of its effectiveness. Merely as a museum of pictures and antiquities it would rank high among the galleries of Europe. Yet it is not mainly or primarily a show-place, like St. Peter's with its cold and vacuous magnificence, or our painfully well-kept English Cathedrals. There is no extreme care for spotless cleanliness, for the perfect repair of every detail, for rigid neatness and orderliness. Here and there the marble is broken and the stone-work crumbled away; fragments have fallen out of some of the gorgeous stained windows. But a faint crumbling of decay seems part of the very vitality of Seville Cathedral; a spotlessly neat and trim church is scarcely likely to be put to much use. This church is a place of real and constant use; people of all classes frequent it; the flutter of ceremonial, the sound of worship, seem seldom to cease within its walls. There are eighty-two altars besides the high altar, and one hesitates to say that there are too many.

The Cathedral is the chief scene of all the great church ceremonies, as well as the centre towards which the characteristic popular religious processions, the *pasos*, are naturally directed. These *pasos* take place everywhere and all day long on Good Friday, and to some extent on the two preceding days. The whole city is given up to them, all vehicular traffic is stopped, and everyone from the mayor and civic dignitaries downwards is present, either in special seats in the public squares, or at the windows or in the streets. It is impossible to cross or penetrate the main arteries of traffic; the visitor

must see the *pasos*, for he cannot see anything else. Every procession consists of a single sacred figure, or a group representing a scene from the Passion, of more than life-size proportions, borne on the heads of some twenty-five invisible men, at an extremely slow pace, and accompanied by the members of the *cofradia*, or lay brotherhood, to which it belongs, dressed in their peculiar costume, which varies in colour in the different brotherhoods, but is essentially a long gown with a tall stiff peaked cowl, covering the face, with loop-holes for the eyes, while each brother carries a great lighted candle. Many of the figures are very finely conceived, and are dramatic in expression; some of them are the work of Montañes, the seventeenth century Sevillian sculptor, and the best and most characteristic exponent of the Sevillian spirit as applied to polychrome carving. More impressive, and to the crowd also more peculiarly sacred, are some of the single figures of the Virgin, in which the quality of the carving is not visible. Such is the Virgen de Regla—a gracious Virgin, slightly bowed forward, with a delicate lace handkerchief in her hand, and enfolded in a vast and gorgeous mantle of dark velvet, gold-embroidered in a large flowing decorative scheme. Candles and bouquets are placed in front of her; a few marigolds are sprinkled on the edge of her mantle, and now and then from among the crowd a child or young girl, in a timid yet ardent voice, sings a brief *saeta* with eyes fixed on the Virgin's face. As the gracious hieratic goddess is thus borne towards the Cathedral on the heads of men, through the reverent bareheaded crowd, to the sound of music, with exceeding slowness and a tremulous vibration which seems to impart to her a kind of living move-

ment, one begins to realise Ashtaroth and the great Mediterranean goddess of Spring, the Berecynthian Mother, borne, as Virgil describes her, on a car, through Phrygian cities; one begins to understand the potent life with which custom and faith and art can endow a mere symbol, and the fascination with which such a symbol may hold the imagination of men.

If Seville Cathedral is ceaselessly rich and interesting in daylight, it gains a new and profound impressiveness at night. Nothing could exceed the overwhelming impression produced by the Cathedral at night during the days before Easter Sunday. All the vast doors were opened wide, and at one corner a brilliant glimpse of the electrically lighted streets streamed in. Yet the cathedral was very dim, for the most part only lighted by a few candles placed high against the great piers of the nave; all round the choir the crowd was impassable; in the rest of the church characteristic Spanish groups crouched at the bases of the great clustered shafts and chattered and used their fans familiarly, as if in their own homes, while dogs ran about unmolested. The MISERERE of Eslava was being performed, and the vast church lent itself superbly to the music and to the scene. It was a scene, as the artist-friend who accompanied me remarked, stranger than the designs of Martin, as bizarre as something out of Poe or Baudelaire. In the dim light the huge piers seemed larger and higher than ever, while the faint altar-lights dimly lit up the iron screen of the *capilla mayor*, as in Rembrandt's conception of the Temple at Jerusalem. In this scene of enchantment one felt that Santa Maria of Seville had delivered up the last secret of her mystery and romance.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.



## THE LITTLE SISTER OF THE POOR.

HAD Jeanne Jugan lived in mediæval days, instead of in the nineteenth century, she would certainly have taken high rank as a worker of miracles, always providing she had not been burnt as a witch. For she spent many long years of her life doing just what all common-sense folk declare cannot be done—making bricks without straw, feeding multitudes without even a loaf or a fish. At an age when most women feel that their work in this world is done, she took on herself a burden so overwhelmingly heavy that the strongest man's courage might well have failed him at the thought of having it to bear. Although beyond reading and writing she had no education whatever, and could hardly do a sum for her life, she found a solution, "all out of her own head," for a problem which had driven to his wits' end many an eminent financier. She outraged, through sheer ignorance, every law of political economy, and set openly at defiance all the precepts of the prudent and the wise; none the less she was practically the leader of a movement which has had an all important influence for good on latter-day social life. Yet she was no genius, she had no special gift indeed of any kind, so far as men could see; and she knew no more of the world and its ways than a child—never was there a woman more naively guileless. "*Mes bons amis, réjouissez-vous avec moi: j'ai gagné le prix de vertu, et j'ai trois milles francs pour mes pauvres,*" she went about exclaiming when the Monthyon Prix de Vertu was adjudged to her, and

all Paris, nay all France, was ringing with her praise. To the day of her death she could never be made to understand that the Prix Monthyon was not a mere lottery prize, given without any regard whatever to merit.

It was the day of the St. Malo races, a holiday for rich and poor alike; the whole countryside had turned out and the course was crowded. Peasants from distant villages were there, in the quaint Breton dress; fisherfolk, from island hamlets; and all the butchers, bakers, and candle-stick makers for miles around. The quality of the district were there, too, in well-worn clothes for the most part; for they are richer by far in ancestors than in guineas. And side by side with them were smart ladies hailing from Paris, as one could see at a glance, in Bretagne only as sojourners. Then the whole garrison was there, from the Colonel to the latest recruit, together with quite a tribe of sportsmen *à la mode* and tourists of all degrees—men whose yachts were lying off the coast, men on the tramp with holes in their shoes. It was a motley company of course: many of the jokes that were bandied about were none too nice, and the mirth they excited was decidedly noisy. Still the day was lovely, the very air was alive with sunshine and everyone was on pleasure bent. Even he who had put his money on the wrong horse, railed only against the Fates and not against his fellows.

It chanced that a local favourite



gained a notable victory that day to the wild delight of the natives, who cheered and cheered when the Breton horse passed the goal, until the huge trees on the Ramparts were all in a tremble. Just when the excitement was at its height, when the laughter was loudest and the uproar at its worst, two women who had been watching the scene from a distance made their way on to the course. Many curious glances were cast at them as they passed, and little wonder was it, for one of them was a strangely incongruous figure in such a place; the contrast indeed between her and those around her was so startling that it smacked of the grotesque. It was as if some latterday hermit (or belated vestal virgin perhaps) had gone astray and found herself on a race course. She was a tall woman, taller by far than a good half of the men on the field; and she was thin, nay gaunt as the veriest scarecrow. There was not a curve in her figure; she was all straight lines, and just the same width from head to foot,—no human being was ever more ungainly. She was in the dress of a nun, a hood that fell around her in folds and a cloak that nearly touched the ground. Once black her garments now had that greyish shade that tells of hard wear, of exposure to dust and sun, of struggles against wind and rain. She had an odd face, a face of the kind that makes one think instinctively of some weatherbeaten rock. It was ugly; that is a point on which there could be no doubt at all; not only was it rugged, but ill shapen, as if it had been cut out with blunt scissors. Still with all its faults, it had a certain subtle charm of its own, it was so peaceful, kindly and strong, so frank and yet so shrewdly wary.

She stood for a moment on the outskirts of the crowd, and glanced

around her with a somewhat humorous look in her eyes, a look in which the worldly wisdom of a wily old diplomatist was combined, in the oddest fashion, with the trustful simplicity of a child. There was no touch of nervousness or fear in her bearing; evidently she recked no more of the men and women around her than if they had been sparrows. She scrutinised them sharply one after another, weighing pros and cons, as it was easy to see, and calculating chances; then with an emphatic little nod of her head, she walked straight up to a group of fashionable young men and held out a well-worn leather satchel. "*Pour les pauvres, mon bon Monsieur,*" she said gently; "*pour les pauvres.* Please give me something for the poor."

The man she addressed started back angrily. Evidently he resented the appeal; but, before he had time to refuse it, the woman was pleading with him and with those around him, was telling them of the old folk for whose sake she had turned out to beg; telling how poor they were, how they must go supperless to bed that night unless she took them back the money wherewith to buy food. "It is terrible to hear old men and women crying for bread, you know," she whispered confidentially. Her voice was low, sweet and persuasive. "It just breaks one's heart to see them suffer. You must give me something for my poor old folk, you must indeed, *mes bons Messieurs.* And you will, I know you will. Why you could not find it in your hearts to let me go home to them empty-handed. Now could you, so good and kind as you are?"

These young sportsmen looked at each other quite shyly, with something near akin to shame in their faces; for this strange woman seemed to take it for granted that they loved

the poor as she did, and were just as eager to help the helpless. Why, had they one and all been the veriest St. Vincent de Pauls, she could not have smiled on them more kindly, or have held her bag before them with more implicit faith in their munificence. Their eyes fell before hers; every man's hand made its way into his pocket as if by instinct; there was a rattling of gold and silver; and Jeanne Jugan was radiant; for she knew that those for whom she was begging were secure of their dinners for many a long day to come.

Jeanne Jugan was born in 1793, just when the old state of things was passing away in France, and all heads were in a whirl with new ideas. She was the eldest daughter of a peasant farmer, a thrifty, good-hearted man who lived at Petites Croix, near Cancale, in Bretagne. As a child her favourite occupation was tending sheep; she would wander about the fields the whole day long with some poor maimed beast or bird in her arms, if she could find one; for, even then she had a quite special tenderness for the unfortunate. She seems to have been kindly and helpful by nature; and she had a certain homely mother wit of her own, which appealed strongly to those around her.

Although even in her young days Jeanne was singularly lacking in beauty, she won the devoted love of a man who was in all respects a suitable match; and, if the testimony of her neighbours is to be trusted, she gave him her own in return. It chanced however that, a few months before the marriage was to have taken place, a priest held a mission at Cancale, and the burden of his preaching was the duty of giving a helping hand to the poor. His sermons impressed Jeanne vividly, the more vividly perhaps, because in them were

put into words the very thoughts that had long been floating about in an incoherent form in her own mind. She had grown up with the poor around her and had realised to the full all the misery of their lot; one of the troubles of her life indeed had always been that she could do so little for them, that she must so often stand aside with folded hands and see them suffer. Thus, when this missionary came with his stirring appeal, she was soon all aglow with sympathy; and when he declared that the work best worth doing in the world was the work of helping the poor, she felt she would give her right hand gladly to be able to do it. And before the mission was ended, she had firmly made up her mind that do it she would, nay that the doing of it should be the one business of her life. A strange resolution for a girl to take on the eve of her marriage with a man whom she loved; a girl, too, who had not a penny in the world and was earning her own daily bread. Had her friends and relatives known of it, they would certainly have declared that she was mad.

When next we hear of her she is living at St. Servan, a seaport a few miles away from Cancale, whither she had betaken herself, it seems, after breaking off her engagement with her sailor lover. She had discovered, she told him, that she had no vocation for married life and must therefore turn her hand to other work. At St. Servan she passed some time in a hospital, nursing a poor old priest; then she went to live as maid with a Mlle. Le Coq, a charming old lady between whom and herself there soon sprang up a warm friendship. Mlle. Le Coq was alone in the world (her brother had died on the guillotine) and she was poor; so small was her income, indeed, that it was only with

a struggle that she could make both ends meet. Jeanne, however, soon invented so many devices for forcing one sou to do the work of two, that Mlle. Le Coq was able not only to live in comfort but to save money; and every farthing that was saved was given away in charity, for she was as keenly interested in the poor as her maid, and as eager to help them. For more than twenty years (the best twenty years of a woman's life too) Jeanne led a quiet uneventful existence taking care of Mlle. Le Coq. She had not indeed much choice in the matter, for during the greater part of this time she was too sorely hampered by lack of strength—she was threatened with consumption—to undertake more arduous duties. This was a terrible trial for her of course; still, even when she was weakest, her faith never wavered; she was perfectly sure that her health would be restored, perfectly sure, too, that sooner or later the chance would be given her of doing something, something definite, to help the poor—what, where, or when she did not know. Meanwhile she was not wasting her time, for she was going about among these people whose interests she had so keenly at heart, not only helping them, so far as she could, but, what was still more important, learning to know them and finding out how best they could be helped.

St. Servan was a poverty-stricken town in those days; it was thronged with beggars, and at every turn, haggard, hungry-looking faces were to be seen. There were no fewer than four thousand names on the pauper list, the list of those who were authorised to appeal for alms, and of these four thousand the great majority were widows, helpless old women whose husbands had been lost at sea. There was no refuge for

these people, not even a workhouse; there was no relief system, no organised charity. Thus beg they must so long as they could, and when they had no longer the strength even to beg they must starve. And many of them were decent thrifty old folk, who had worked hard in their time on scant commons, and it was owing to no fault of their own that poverty had overtaken them. Little wonder Jeanne's heart was sorely troubled as she went about in this town; or that she came to look upon the aged poor as a class apart even from the poor, a class who were being cruelly wronged by their fellows.

When Mlle. Le Coq died, she left her furniture and what money she had (it was but little) to Jeanne who, as she was much stronger now than in her young days, decided to try to earn a livelihood by going out to work as a charwoman. She therefore installed herself and her belongings in an old tumble-down house which she shared with a friend of hers, a Mlle. Aubert. Just when all was going well with her in her new home, when she by dint of hard work was earning not only enough to live on, but something to give away, a little incident occurred which changed the whole current of her life. One autumn evening, in the year 1840, she received a visit from two young girls, Virginie Trédaniel and Marie Jamet, who came to beg her to sub-let to them part of her house, as they had heard that she had more rooms than she required. She found that it was not for themselves alone that they sought a lodging, but also for a blind old woman, who, although she was, as they confessed, no relative of theirs, was under their care. This excited Jeanne's interest, especially as the girls were not only young (the

elder of them was under twenty) but evidently poor; indeed they were both earning their bread by the work of their hands. On questioning them she learned that they had taken charge of the old woman, who was penniless, out of charity at the suggestion of a certain Abbé Le Pailleur, a young priest who had come to St. Servan two years before, and was doing a great work there. They had both had a strong desire to enter a convent and would have done so, had not the Abbé convinced them that they would do much better to stay in the world and serve God by tending His poor.

The girls' story touched Jeanne to the quick; she at once took them and their charge into her house as permanent guests; then, sure that M. Le Pailleur must be a man after her own heart, she went off to see him. There was a strong bond of sympathy between them, as they both felt from the first; for he had the welfare of the destitute as keenly at heart as she had, and was just as sorely grieved at the misery of their condition. The sight of all those helpless old paupers loitering about the streets had stirred him, and already, before ever he had met her, he had resolved that something must and should be done to better their lot. Nay he had in his head even then a rough plan for the doing of this something, and was only waiting until he found suitable help-mates to give it a trial. Thus the day he met Jeanne Jugan was an all important one in his life as in hers; for in her he found the very help-mate he wanted, if this work on which both their hearts were set were to be done; while she found in him the inspirer and guide whom she had so long been seeking. Until he joined forces with her, he was helpless, owing to the practical difficulties that stood in

the way of the carrying out of this plan of his; and she, too, was helpless, for she had no plan at all, and knew not how to set about framing one.

The Abbé and Jeanne had many long consultations together, in the course of which he insisted that the first thing to be done towards mitigating this great misery they saw around them was to provide the more helpless of the old paupers with some place where they could sleep. The scheme indeed which he had thought out was one for opening a sort of refuge, where these people might be lodged and tended free; and he proposed that she, Marie Jamet and Virginie Trédaniel, should throw in their lots together, and try what could be done in this way, beginning of course on a very humble scale. Without a moment's hesitation Jeanne consented, gladly, even gratefully, although the Abbé warned her of all the difficulties they would have to contend against, warned her that whatever money were required they would have to find, as he had none to give them. And she was forty-seven at the time (a woman of forty-seven, it must be remembered, is as a rule as old as a man at sixty) and all she possessed in the world was her furniture and some six hundred francs.

Not a moment was lost; three decrepit old women were at once installed in her house, and so many more applied for admission, that in the course of a few months she removed to a larger house. Within two years she removed again, to the street known to-day as Rue Jeanne Jugan, where she had quite a mansion; for by this time she had no fewer than fifty old men and women on her hands and hundreds more were clamouring to be admitted. Never was there, surely, a philanthropic undertaking that developed so rapidly from such a

humble beginning. When these three poor working women bade their first guests welcome, they had to explain to them that they could provide them only with beds, not with food, much as they would have liked to do so. They had to explain to them, too, that they could not stay with them all day, as they must go out to earn money, money for the rent. Every morning when they had cleaned the house and helped their charges to dress they went off to work; otherwise they would have had to starve, for they had nothing but their earnings to rely upon either for their own support or the support of the home.

When they started their undertaking, their plan was that the old people whom they lodged and tended should go out during the day and obtain food for themselves by begging. They were quite alive to the inconvenience, and possible danger, of this arrangement; still, as there seemed then to be no alternative, they gave it a trial. And a disastrous failure it proved. Begging at best is a demoralising calling and these people were neither better nor worse than their fellows. Some of them brought back too much, others too little; and then there were quarrels. Some declared themselves too weak to go out; others went out and returned in a state that made their hostesses' hair stand on end. Troubles and annoyances of all sorts followed, and there were even scandals; so that at length Jeanne Jugan and her companions were driven, through sheer necessity, to declare that they would have no more of this going out to beg; they would provide their charges with food, as well as with beds. At the time when they made this announcement, they knew no more than the birds of the air where the food was to come from; for that they should

ever earn enough money to buy it was quite out of the question. Jeanne, it is true, had an idea in her head. One day when Marie and Virginia were racking their brains for a plan by which the required food could be obtained, she startled them by announcing that she was going out to beg. "It is the only thing to be done," she remarked. "If these old people are not to go out to beg for themselves, I must go out to beg for them; that is clear." And out she went with a large basket on her arm, and in her pocket a long list of houses,—the houses where, as her charges assured her, beggars could count on being helped.

Jeanne went from house to house, and wherever she went she told her tale, told how she had many helpless old people at home, and was out seeking food wherewith to feed them. She did not ask for money, only for scraps and odds and ends—the remains of the previous day's dinner or of that morning's breakfast. For she had made up her mind after much cogitation, that she was more likely to obtain such things as these than money, and that she could turn them to just as good account. In some houses she was laughed at, in others she was insulted, but she went on her way through it all quite unconcerned; for she was far too intent on the experiment she was trying to trouble herself about what people might think of her and her doings. All that she cared for was that they should give; and give they did for the most part, and generously too. Little as she knew it, she was a born expert in the art of begging. Those from whom she used to beg maintain that no other woman ever could beg as she did. Her heart and soul were so obviously in her work, she was so earnest and yet so cheery—she could jest and joke as she made her appeals,



yet never were appeals more touchingly pathetic. What undoubtedly gave special force to her words was her faith in her kind, her firm belief that there was never man, woman, or child, who was not by nature kindly and charitable. No matter to whom she turned for help, though it were to the veriest niggard, she took it for granted, and showed it by her manner, that he would like to give her what she sought, and would give it gladly if he but could. And no refusal, however surly, ever made her waver in this belief. Indeed she lavished such hearty sympathy on those who said her nay, and was so sure they only said it because they must, that so often as not they changed their minds at the last moment and said her yea.

There were great rejoicings in the Home when Jeanne returned from her first begging expedition; for she brought with her a well-filled basket, many promises too that other baskets should be filled. Thus her venture had proved a success. It was a stroke of genius indeed, as the result showed, this asking for food instead of for money; for scores of men and still more women who would grudge a few pence will give away a shilling's worth of food without a thought. Jeanne traded on this little weakness most skilfully. When she knocked at a door, what she first asked for was always "broken victuals"—crusts of bread, beef bones, ends of bacon, or drops of soup and gravy, even tea-leaves and coffee-grounds, all things of little account to their owners but of great value to her; for in her hands they became the ingredients of savoury pottages and refreshing drinks. Then she made friends of various tradespeople, especially market-women, and persuaded them to let her have at night whatever provisions they might have left

which would be unsaleable by the next morning. As time passed she had recourse to many other devices for getting hold of things useless and making them useful. And the end of it was that she was able to organise a fairly regular, if somewhat hand-to-mouth, commissariat for the Home, and provide its poor old inmates with three meals every day—out of nothing as it were.

When first she went forth to beg the Home was face to face with ruin; had she not gone forth, or had she returned empty-handed, it must have closed its doors. The whole undertaking must have come to naught, in fact, had she not done what she did, had she not found out a way of procuring food that cost no one anything, of feeding men and women without spending a farthing, or rendering anyone by a farthing the poorer.

The food-supply problem once solved, the Home developed rapidly. Before long both Marie Jamet and Virginie Trédaniel were obliged to follow Jeanne's example and give up going out to work, that they might devote themselves entirely to taking care of their charges. While she was out begging, they cooked, washed, cleaned, and kept order in the Home. And to keep order there was no child's play; all sorts and conditions were received, it must be remembered, Jews and Gentiles, Turks and infidels; for no questions were asked of those who presented themselves providing they were old and destitute. Already in 1842, M. Le Pailleur had deemed it advisable to form the three workers into a sisterhood (the Little Sisters of the Poor was the name he gave them) bound by vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and hospitality. A fourth sister joined them almost immediately, but no fifth presented herself for two years; for a woman



does not lightly enter an order in which she will have to pass her days either waiting on cantankerous and often degraded old people or tramping the streets as a beggar.

Certainly these first sisters had a terribly hard time, so hard a time indeed that it needed all the Abbé Le Pailleur's sympathy and support sometimes to prevent their courage failing them. Every day brought them more cares, more worries, more work to do. Even the great house in Rue Jeanne Jugan was soon not large enough for the crowds that flocked there; helpless old men and women had to be turned away every night, and this almost broke the sisters' hearts. The Home must be enlarged, they declared; and although a fifty centime piece was all the money they had in hand, they straightway set to work to enlarge it. It was their intention to do a good deal of the building themselves, all the unskilled labour in fact, but the builders, when they saw them carrying bricks, rose up in a body and vowed they would have none of their help; they would do the work for nothing, and they did. This was but the first of the many kindly actions by which working men have shown their gratitude for the work the Little Sisters are doing. Even when the war against the Orders was at its height and "*Clericalisme, voilà l'ennemi*," was the great popular cry, the roughest mob would always greet a Little Sister with kindly enthusiasm. "Say what you like against me, but if you say a word against the Little Sisters of the Poor, I'll do for you (*Je l'effacerai*)," the most violent perhaps of all the *Dames des Halles* once cried, in a moment of excitement, and she would certainly have kept her word. Indeed some Parisian workers did once nearly kill a man who had ventured to address a Little Sister

rudely. A party of soldiers who were stationed near one of the Homes used to send the sisters soup from their mess every day; and when they left the town, they persuaded the regiment that succeeded them to do the same. Another regiment, a crack artillery regiment too, once removed the sisters' furniture to a new Home, all for love; and it was at the urgent request of the Garde Nationale that the Home in the 10th Paris Arrondissement was opened.

It was Jeanne Jugan undoubtedly who first won for the sisters their popularity. This great gaunt woman, with her shrewd homely face and her gentle kindly ways, made friends for them wherever she went, and she went everywhere; for the larger the Home became the more food of course its inmates required. They required other things, too, besides food; the rent had to be paid and coals must be bought. Thus money soon became a pressing necessity; and as enough could not be had at St. Servan, Jeanne began to make excursions to neighbouring towns, especially to pleasure resorts where races and regattas were held; for she was not long in discovering that of all givers gamblers are the most generous. She made her way (how she did it is a mystery) across thresholds never crossed before by a beggar, into bankers' private rooms, great ladies' boudoirs, officers' barracks, fashionable clubs, nay even into Limited Liability Companies' offices. And once there the battle was half won: people who would as soon have thought of flying as of giving to anyone else, gave to Jeanne.

Meanwhile the sisters, some four years after they had opened the Home at St. Servan, were seized with the desire to open one at Rennes. They had no money wherewith to do so—they always lived in the hand-to-

mouth fashion, giving away whatever they had more than enough for a few days' supply. But in their eyes this was a matter of no great importance; for they were firmly convinced that whatever was needed would be sent. Jeanne Jugan would have opened fifty homes without a scruple, so boundless was her faith. She held that St. Joseph had taken the Little Sisters and their charges under his special protection, and although he might let them fall into sore straits sometimes, he would never let real harm befall them. And she had the strangest stories to tell as to the way in which they had again and again been fed when in great want, by ravens as it were. The Bishop of Rennes, however, who was a wise and prudent man, objected to having in his diocese a home dependent on ravens for its food supply. Whereupon Jeanne came down and literally took the town by storm. She visited every personage of importance there, talked to his wife and daughters, and convinced them one and all, in defiance of common-sense, that the home might be opened without any risk whatever, nay that it *must* be opened. And opened it was; and the result proved that she was right; crowds of old people were made comfortable and happy there, and every day brought with it their daily bread. The next home the sisters opened was at Dinan, whither they went at the request of the municipal authorities; and from that time their homes increased and multiplied in the most marvellous fashion. Soon they were to be found in all parts of France, in Rouen, Bordeaux, Lyon, in Paris itself; and, as time passed, in Belgium, England, Spain, all over Europe in fact. In 1854 the Pope formally recognised the order as one doing a great work in the world; two years later Napoleon the Third took it under his special

protection; and the Empress Eugénie and Queen Isabella vied with each other in lavishing marks of sympathy on its members. At the present time there are between four and five thousand Little Sisters of the Poor, and they are hard at work in all parts of the world, not only in Europe, but in America, Australia, and even in Africa. They have under their care hundreds of homes and thousands and thousands of poor helpless old folk. They still continue to go from house to house begging for scraps and odds and ends, just as Jeanne taught them to beg. Not but that they have now rich and powerful friends to help them, many of them friends whom she first secured; mine-owners send them coal; gas-companies send them coke; and such unlikely people as money-changers give them a regular subsidy. What is stranger still, perhaps, the Paris Jockey Club pays them tithes on its gains, and the Compagnie de Crocheteurs once sent them a large bet it had won.

Until 1864 Jeanne Jugan continued to be the mainstay of the Little Sisters, their beggar in chief; then her health failed and she retired to the Tour St. Joseph, the great Central Home of the order, where its novices are trained for their work. There she died in 1879, and sorely was she bemoaned, for never was woman more loved of the poor, more revered, or with better reason. She was only a poor ignorant peasant with all the limitations, foibles and superstitions of her class; yet, such as she was, she did more than any other woman has ever yet done towards bettering the lot of the most pitiable of all mortals—those who lack the means on which to live because their strength has failed them, those whom no man will hire because they are old.

EDITH SELLERS.

## RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

It is twenty-one years since the serene and dignified figure of Ralph Waldo Emerson (of whose birth the centenary occurs on May 25th) passed away. During this period his life and writings have been the theme of many books and innumerable articles, yet nothing that has been written has really modified or altered the unique position accorded to him by his contemporaries. It is doubtless true that he is not read to-day by Englishmen with the same avidity as a couple of decades ago, and to a generation that knows not the magic of Emerson's personality it may savour of weakness to speak of him with enthusiasm, but it is none the less true that his influence is as potent as ever. So many of his aphorisms have passed into current speech, and, while the source may be unrecognised, they have still the same power over the minds of men. Emerson has never lacked admirers in his own country and no Young American's education is considered complete to-day without a knowledge of his philosophy. More than sixty years ago he taught the generation then growing up around him the value of faith and hope, and it was Emerson who gave the New World its charter of "intellectual independence." Lowell acknowledged the debt when he wrote:

The Puritan revolt had made us ecclesiastically and the Revolution politically independent, but we were still socially and intellectually moored to English thought, till Emerson cut the cable and gave us a chance at the dangers and the glories of blue water. No man young enough to have felt it can forget or cease to be grateful for the mental and moral

*nudge* which he received from the writings of his high-minded and brave-spirited countryman. That we agree with him, or that he always agrees with himself, is aside from the question; but that he arouses in us something that we are better for having awakened, whether that something be of opposition or assent, that he speaks always to what is highest and least selfish in us, few Americans of the generation younger than his own would be disposed to deny.

It has been said that the stock from which Emerson sprang was ripe for such a man, and his genealogy is certainly a remarkable one, as for more than two centuries one or more of his ancestors had been in the ministry. While heredity, in which Emerson himself had a firm belief, played a part in the unfolding of his character, the formative influence of his boyhood days did more. Left fatherless at eight years of age, his mother found that after attending to the physical needs of six young children, she had no time left to devote to their education. This duty chiefly devolved upon their aunt, Miss Mary Moody Emerson, a self-educated person of high character and lofty ideals. She idolised her nephews in her own way and is described as "full of angularities; a perpetual offender against minor social proprieties; orthodox by intellectual conviction, heterodox by native temperament."

"No whistle," said Ralph Waldo, "that every mouth could play on, but a pibroch from which only a native Highlander could draw music." Such teaching as this exactly suited young Emerson and was the best possible for developing his latent powers. As one writer says, "it was Emerson's

happiness to have grown up under the care and inspiration of certain women who were as noble as any then living in New England. He was ever finely chivalrous towards true women; never wavered in his reverential esteem for them. A good woman never despairs of the ideal right—that was one of his characteristic sayings; it expressed his sense of the value of the good women who had so lovingly tended and shaped his earliest years."

In 1823 Emerson began to study theology and was thus preparing to follow the profession for which he seemed marked out, since in his veins ran so much clerical blood. His health was the source of much anxiety about this time, and the authorities, recognising his worth and seriousness, dispensed with the usual examination, and on October 10th, 1826, he was "approved" to preach.

Emerson, by his nature and disposition, came near to realising that perfection which is at once the ideal and the goal of humanity. It has been said that we must go back to Spinoza before we can find another character to compare to his in its startling purity and self-fidelity. We are lost in admiring wonder while viewing the aerial height to which he attained, and we search in vain for some flaw in his character, some trifling indiscretion, that would assure us that after all he really was a man like ourselves. In all the relationships of life he was never found wanting. As son, husband, father, or citizen, his conduct responds to our expectations. He was the ideal of a friend, and, beautifully as he has written on the subject of friendship, he has thrown his writings into the shade by his noble practice. No man had truer, more generous and beautiful relations with his literary contemporaries.

But, perfect though he was, his temperament was not suited to his vocation, and what may be described as the crisis in his life came when he found it necessary to sever his connection with the Unitarian Church at Boston, owing to his being unable to accept the usual view of the Communion service. It was to him a purely spiritual rite and he could only retain it as a commemoration. All around were forms and shadows; "the Almighty God was pleased to qualify and send forth a man to teach men that they must serve Him with the heart; that only that life was religious which was thoroughly good; that sacrifices were smoke of our own shadows." Henceforward his pulpit was the rostrum.

As a lecturer he was brilliant and inspiring. His rich deep voice (a gift he seems to have inherited from his mother) had a strangely moving effect on those who listened to him. His audience might complain that there was no logical sequence of thought in his lecture, no "ponderable acquisition," but they were thankful for "ennobling impulses." "Can you tell me," asked one at the close of a lecture, "what connection there is between that last sentence and the one that went before, and what connection it all has with Plato?" "None my friend save in God," replied Emerson. For forty years he was greatly sought after as a lecturer, and it is as well to remember that he did not meet with instant recognition. His first admirers were won "in the pulpit," and slowly but surely his fame spread, until at last he was acclaimed the chief of American philosophy and letters.

We are told that Emerson was of more than medium height, erect until his latter days, neither very thin nor stout in frame, with rather narrow and unusually sloping shoul-

ders, with long neck but very well poised head, and of dignified carriage. His eyes were deep set and of an intense blue, his hair dark brown, his complexion clear and always with good colour. His features were pronounced and emphatic, and his face striking for its reserved power of expression. In manner he was reticent and he did not shine in general conversation, and in ordinary intercourse with men he did not appear as a genius. This reticence seems to have been in part due to a passion for exactness in the use of language which caused him to hesitate until he was sure of the right word. He could be affable and encouraging to others, and there are numerous instances on record of his spontaneous hospitality.

In 1833 Emerson visited England. The journey, he tells us, was undertaken to "find new affinities between me and my fellow men." While here he met Carlyle, and the meeting was the prelude to a life-long friendship, almost unique in its way, resting as it does on two short interviews with fourteen years between them. To Carlyle the visit was like that of an angel; and Emerson records "that many a time upon the sea, on my homeward voyage, I remember with joy my lonely philosopher." Emerson was in this country again in 1847 to fulfil lecturing engagements, and his impressions are preserved for us in "English Traits," published in 1856. At this time (1847) the Chartist movement was at its height; and France was on the eve of a Revolution. He saw at once that, however gloomy the outlook might be, England would not fail. In a speech at Manchester in November, 1847, he said:

I see her not dispirited, not weak, but well remembering that she has seen dark days before;—indeed with a kind of in-

stinct that she sees a little better in a cloudy day, and that in storm of battle and calamity, she has a secret vigour and a pulse like a cannon. I see her in her old age, not decrepit, but young, and still daring to believe in her power of endurance and expansion. Seeing this, I say, All hail! mother of nations, mother of heroes, with strength still equal to the time; still wise to entertain and swift to execute the policy which the mind and heart of mankind requires in the present hour, and thus only hospitable to the foreigner, and truly a home to the thoughtful and generous who are born in the soil. So be it! so let it be! If it be not so, if the courage of England goes with the chances of a commercial crisis, I will go back to the capes of Massachusetts, and my own Indian stream, and say to my countrymen, the old race are all gone, and the elasticity and hope of mankind must henceforth remain on the Alleghany ranges, or nowhere.

These words were spoken over fifty years ago, and it would not be altogether unprofitable to examine ourselves as a nation in the light of his friendly criticism. Emerson was but little concerned with what was ephemeral in our national life, and sweeping aside non-essentials he set himself to answer the question, why England is England. What are the elements that have contributed to give us that hold over other nations? The best admiral could not have placed or anchored this little island in a more judicious or effective position. To him the Englishman is of all men the one who stands firmest in his shoes. One element in our greatness is the number of individuals among us of character and personal ability. We are credited with supreme endurance in war and labour; and, while as a race we are instinct with the spirit of order and of calculation in our every-day affairs, we are also capable of larger views. But the indulgence is expensive and costs us great crises, or a great outlay of accumulated mental power. Domesticity is the taproot that enables us to

branch wide and high. Our women, he considers, are the finest in the world; and the advantageous position of the middle class goes far towards securing our stability and progress. He indulges in pleasant raillery at our dislike of change and naturally is somewhat hard on our "conformity," saying, "the most sensible and well-informed men possess the power of thinking just so far as the bishop in religious matters." Be this as it may he generously adds that, if religion be the doing of all good, and for its sake the suffering of all evil, that divine secret has existed in England from the days of Alfred.

"A great interpreter of life ought not himself to need interpretation," says John Morley, and Emerson certainly does not need an interpreter, charged though he may be by some readers with obscurity. For the "pungent and unforgettable truths" he utters are drawn from the bed-rock of our primary emotions and are self-affirming. His view of life was that of the healthy man. The development of the body must go hand in hand with the expansion of the mind; the cultivation of the heart must accompany the training of the intellect. Emerson was the master of "living well" and, as he said, it requires as much breadth of power to succeed in this as it does to win laurels in the State, or the army, or the bar, or any other function to which man may set his hand. When we examine his writings we are amazed at the fertility of illustration, the wealth of imagery, with which every essay is crowded; and of Emerson we can say he saw life steadily and whole.

Emerson's correspondence with Carlyle is worth reading to-day if only for the Pisgah view we get of the two giants. It is hardly necessary at this time of day to deny the

accusation once made against Emerson that he was indebted to Carlyle, for Lowell dealt effectively with this at the time when he wrote the rough lines of comparison.

There are persons, mole-blind to the soul's make and style,  
Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and Carlyle.  
To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,  
Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the rarer;  
He sees fewer objects, but clearer, trulier,  
If C.'s as original, E.'s more peculiar;  
That he's more of a man you might say of the one,  
Of the other he's more of an Emerson;  
C.'s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb,—  
E. the clear eyed Olympian, rapid and slim;  
The one's two-thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,  
Where the one's most abounding, the other's to seek;  
C.'s generals require to be seen in the mass,—  
E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;  
C. gives nature and God his own fit of the blues,  
And rims common-sense things with mystical hues,—  
E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,  
And looks coolly round him with sharp common-sense;  
C. shows you how every-day matters unite  
With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night,  
While E. in a plain, preternatural way,  
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day.

These two rendered each other a mutual service, Emerson when he edited *SARTOR RESARTUS* and aided in its publication, and Carlyle when he introduced the first series of essays to the English public.

In one letter to Carlyle Emerson speaks of his method of composition. Reading and writing with very little system, he says, he produced the most



fragmentary results, "paragraphs incomprehensible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle." His garden and the Concord woods were his real study during the years of his greatest activity, and in these walks he often carried his note-book, or, as frequently happened, recorded the thought on his return to the house, striving to express it exactly as it came to him. It must be admitted that this want of method, this "unparalleled non-sequaciousness" as Mr. Birrell calls it, is irritating to many who would seek to judge him by the ordinary canons of criticism; but in thus recording all his inspirations he has given us a multitude of tonic sentences that "pulse as if from the veins of Spring."

On his return to Boston after his first visit to England Emerson went to reside at Concord with his mother and there, on his marriage with Miss Lydia Jackson, his second wife, he settled for the rest of his life. In this "Happy Valley" he had as neighbours men and women of widely diverse views who had little in common beyond the desire for intellectual culture. Of the number was A. B. Alcott, the initiator of the Fruitlands community, "bent on saving the world by a return to acorns and the golden age." Then there was Margaret Fuller, the first editor of the brilliant but short-lived *DIAL*, a woman of many eccentricities, yet of a deeply sympathetic nature, who became transformed into the beautiful Zenobia in *THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE*. It is in this novel that Hawthorne, that "strangely silent figure," has preserved for us his recollections and impressions of Concord and its residents. He tells us of young visionaries and grey-headed theorists who were attracted thither by the wide spreading influence of a great and original thinker, men who

having discovered what they hoped was a new thought hastened to Emerson to ascertain its quality and value. It was among these strangely-assorted yet receptive minds that the ideas of Fourier found an easy entrance, and the now famous "Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education" was the outcome. Emerson was pressed to join in what proved an abortive experiment, but declined on the ground that he was not willing to remove from one prison to another a little larger.

Of all those residing in Concord at this time, Thoreau was the most conspicuous figure next to Emerson. It was with this morbidly eccentric genius that Emerson had the closest friendship, and this was the one person from whom he gained more than any other man alive or dead. Emerson in his turn had a marked influence on Thoreau, with whom he became acquainted in 1837, and who was for two years from the spring of 1841 an inmate of his house. Emerson tells us that hermit and stoic though Thoreau was, he was really fond of sympathy, and was a friend, knowing not only the secret of friendship, but almost worshipped by those few persons who resorted to him as their confessor and prophet.

Emerson acknowledged no man as master, although no one borrowed more than he did from the writings of others. He admires, but always with a reservation, and, he says in effect of all great men that the power which they communicate is not theirs. When we are exalted by ideas, we do not owe this to Plato but to the idea, to which also Plato was debtor. Emerson was above all things an optimist, and no one has taught more clearly and forcibly than he the duty of making the best of this world, of sinking personal and private ends for the universal good. His mind so

finely attuned to the infinite was able instantly to recognise "The Eternal One" where and howsoever He might reveal Himself. His faith in his fellow men was large and hopeful. He declares that evil is only privation and has no real existence when the part is seen in its proper relation to the whole.

We shall look in vain in Emerson's writings for any system or orderly development of ideas. Gifted with a rare spiritual imagination his influence can best be described as an impulse, a compelling force towards all that is noblest and best. And who shall say he was not wise in this? He himself declared that systems are merely the outside husk, worthless except as a temporary embodiment of the essential truth. For the majority of men have not the time, or the patience, to assimilate a system, rather are they content with a mood or temper of thought, an impulse not fully reasoned out, which guides them to the acceptance of some opinions and the rejection of others, and which acts almost automatically as the processes of physical digestion. Along this line Emerson is of immeasurable assistance. He has no patience with the logic-chopper. "He does not argue with men in whom the faculty of vision is non-existent or clouded by want of use. He is content simply to see." Belief in one's own thoughts, obedience to the inner light, be the consequences what they may, is the burden of his teaching. "Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string." Impatient of a "foolish consistency," the "hobgoblin of little minds," he adjures us to "speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day." And again: "Nothing at last is sacred but the integrity of your own mind. . . . Absolve

you to yourself and you shall have the suffrage of the whole world." We must, therefore, watch for that gleam of light that flashes across the mind from within and not dismiss without notice our thoughts because they are our thoughts, or else one day they will come back to us with alienated majesty. Such a course of conduct demands more than ordinary courage, for the fear of being misunderstood is a terror that keeps us to low and grovelling aims. With Emerson self-reliance includes all the virtues; it is the basis of all character, and the essence of all heroism. For after all what distinguishes those we call great men from ourselves is chiefly this, that while we rely on them, they rely on themselves. Among the masses of men self-reliance is practically non-existent, and it becomes as easy to predict how they will speak and act at any given moment, as it does to tell day from night. But self-reliance, by breaking up the routine of thought, lets new light into the darkened mind, and sets the world spinning on the paths of progress. It is, however, necessary to utter a word of warning, for self-reliance easily degenerates into conceit and bombast. We must guard against that self-trust, so closely allied to egoism, which issues in self-assertiveness, and is frequently actuated by the greed of gain, or the love of power. It is obviously all to our good to cultivate that self-reliance based on knowledge, for in that way we learn to walk on our own feet, to work with our own hands, to speak with our own minds, and come at last to understand that self-reliance, the height and perfection of man, is after all reliance on God.

Emerson is the despair of those good people who are unable to comprehend a man unless it is possible to affix a label to him. He has been

called a Pantheist, but he never confounds God and the Universe, for to him God is the soul of the Universe. Having sympathy with the unsatisfied aspirations of all ages it is not surprising to find him classed with the Transcendentalists, but he himself described Transcendentalism as the "Saturnalia or excess of faith." Mysticism is perhaps the word that most nearly suggests the peculiar position he occupies, but then he would not swallow, nor does he wish us to, all the mystic formulas. As Sir Leslie Stephen puts it :

Certainly Emerson is on the threshold of mysticism. His peculiarity is that he stops there. He does not lose his balance. He respects common sense and dreads to distrust his vague aspirations by translating them into a definite system . . . His mysticism may be unintelligible or false if taken as a solid philosophy. It reveals at any rate the man himself, the pure simple-minded, high-feeling man, made of the finest clay of human nature; the one man who to Carlyle uttered a genuine human voice, and soothed the profound gloom of dyspeptic misanthropy; a little too apt, no doubt, to fall into the illusion of taking the world to be as comfortably constituted as himself; and apt also to withdraw from the ugly drama, in which the graver passions are inextricably mixed up with the heroic and the rational to the remote mountain-tops of mystical reflection.

It might aptly be said of Emerson, what he said of Shakespeare: Emerson is the only biographer of Emerson; and even he can tell nothing, except to the Emerson in us; that is, to our most apprehensive and sympathetic hour. Emerson saw in flashes. We may have read several pages with no firm grip of what he would have us see, when suddenly, as the appearance of the sun from behind a thick cloud, the truth stands out in all its pristine beauty, and we are thrilled with a

strange awe and delight. The OVER SOUL more than any other one of Emerson's essays contains the essentials of his teaching. To him God is the centre of all things and out of Him nothing can exist. The soul pre-existed in God and is an efflux from God and in time will return into the undeveloped Deity and be at one with Him. Death to the individual self, surrender to God, is the condition of its return. This deep power in which we exist is self-sufficing and perfect in every hour; and every man is sensible of it at some time; subtle and elusive though it may be, it pervades and contains us. It is this common heart, this Over-soul, that confutes man's tricks and talents and constrains him to pass for what he is, to speak from his character and not from his tongue. What we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, sleeping man, is for ever misrepresenting himself. Did we but see the soul whose organ man is through his actions, it would make our knees bend; and if the soul but have its way, intellect, will, and affection become transmuted. The weakness begins in man trying to ignore this Unity and to be something of himself. Thus it is we strive to repress ourselves in our intercourse with our fellow-men, but it is useless, for "we know better than we do," and by every word we utter, with our will or against our will, we draw our portrait to the eye of our companions. "Every opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a thread-ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag." There comes the instant when, raised above the commonplace, we intuitively perceive this unity of thought, and then it is that our hearts beat with a noble sense of power and duty. We are conscious of attaining a

higher self-possession ; and it is indeed a memorable moment when some new truth is revealed.

In the mundane sphere of politics Emerson was more ideal than practical. While not identifying himself with any party, for he can state the case equally well for the liberal as for the conservative, he did not neglect his duty as a citizen. He was careful to counsel all those who enjoyed the privilege of a vote to see that they used it when opportunity offered. Emerson looked forward to the day when the highest end of government would be the culture of men, for if men are educated the institutions will share their improvement, and the moral sentiment will write the law of the land. In the meantime there should be no repression of any noble attempt or discouragement of any generous scheme, no opposition to any reform, that was a real reform. All should be allowed to do their work, and having outlived their usefulness cease to be. His interest in public affairs was quickened, and his views regarding the function of the State modified, by the slavery question. Although wavering at first he soon joined hands with the Abolitionists and the cause had no more fervent advocate. Both by speech and writing he worked for the removal of "this accursed mountain of sorrow" for ever out of the world.

In his own time Emerson was accused of exalting intellect above the affections. This may have been due, as already indicated, to a certain austerity of manner, for no one has written more beautifully of those twin-sweeteners of life, love and friendship, than he has. In his essay on LOVE he is fully sensible of the celestial rapture that seizes us at the tender age and puts us quite beside ourselves. The remembrance of this early vision outlasts all other remem-

brances and is a wreath of flowers on the oldest brows.

In the noon and afternoon of life we still throb at the recollection of days when happiness was not happy enough, but must be drugged with the relish of pain and fear ; for he touched the secret of the matter, who said of love,

'All other pleasures are not worth its pains :'

and when the day was not long enough, but the night, too, must be consumed in keen recollections ; when the head boiled all night on the pillow with the generous deed it resolved on ; when the moonlight was a pleasing fever, and the stars were letters, and the flowers ciphers, and the air was coined into song ; when all business seemed an impertinence, and all the men and women running to and fro in the streets were pictures.

As life advances even love becomes more impersonal and lovers grow to recognise that the purification of the intellect and the heart is the real marriage, foreseen and prepared from the first, and wholly above our consciousness. Love in the sexes is the first symbol of friendship ; nothing life has to offer is so satisfying as the profound good understanding, which can subsist between two virtuous men. In all association there must be compromise, but there are two sovereign elements that go to the composition of all friendship, and one is not superior to the other. These elements are truth and tenderness, and if they are linked to a total magnanimity and trust we are able to defy all infirmity.

As a writer of verse Emerson has several defects, chief among which is the inability to rhyme correctly, but if, as Carlyle says, it is a man's sincerity and depth of vision that make him a poet, Emerson assuredly deserves to be included among the poets. A prose poet he unquestionably was ; and he seems to have deliberately chosen to write verse as the medium of expression of his

inmost thoughts, the key to many of which are only to be found in his life. There are many lines that have a haunting beauty all their own. As he himself said "it is the thought passionate and alive that makes the poem." In the *DIRGE* and again in the beautiful *THRENODY*, the first part of which was written immediately after the death of his son aged six and the latter part two years later, we see the suppressed grief of a truly noble nature teaching how a great sorrow should be nobly borne. The *RHODORA* is a perfect gem.

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,  
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,  
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,  
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.  
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,  
Made the black water with their beauty gay;  
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,  
And court the flower that cheapens his array.  
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why  
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,  
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,  
Then beauty is its own excuse for being:  
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!  
I never thought to ask, I never knew:  
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose  
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

In the *SNOW STORM*, as the following lines will show, we have an exquisite bit of descriptive writing—

Come see the north-wind's masonry.  
Out of an unseen quarry evermore  
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer  
Curves his white bastions with projected roof  
Round every windward stake, or tree,  
or door.

Mockingly,  
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;  
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;  
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,  
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and, at the gate,  
A tapering turret overtops the work.

In the *TERMINUS*, written about 1866, Emerson strikes the first note of his advancing years, and it is fitting to take leave of this simple and sincere soul, whose remains rest in the peaceful cemetery of Sleepy Hollow, close beside those of Hawthorne and Thoreau, and near to the Concord that he loved so well, in the concluding lines of what there is every reason to believe was his last poem.

As the bird trims her to the gale,  
I trim myself to the storm of time,  
I man the rudder, reef the sail,  
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime;  
"Lowly faithful, banish fear,  
Right onward drive unharmed;  
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,  
And every wave is charmed."

# SWITZERLAND OF THE WAYSIDE.

OUR village lies just off the steep road which leads up from the dusty white plain to the popular "health resort" which reaps a golden harvest summer after summer from its untilled lands. You can drive up to it in a shaky little vehicle with the driver striding beside you, hooting dismally at his patient horse; or you can secure a place in the *poste*, the stuffy yellow diligence which carries the mails of the Republic; or you can go on foot,—a long-legged man will be sorry if he does anything else—along the zigzag way bordered first by vineyards and then by chestnuts and then by ranks of dark blue pines, and above them the Teeth of the South showing white and jagged against the sky. The wide square *place* is bounded on three sides by the bakery, the post-office, the grocer's shop, the communal restaurant and by the modest inn which presents itself as the *Hôtel Sans-Souci*; a number of chalets are scattered on the slope of the hill which rises behind it; it is divided from the church and the curé's house by the high road.

Our village is not a fashionable resort. The occupants of the little carriages which are for ever creeping up from the hot plain drive past us with a glance of weary indifference, to be deposited about an hour later at one of the big hotels that cluster thickly together at the head of the valley. They pause here sometimes while the driver refreshes himself and exchanges a word or two with the "boots" of the inn, and the villagers strolling down to the edge of the

road return their indifferent glances with a gaze of friendly contempt. They look so bored and so dusty, and they have such piles of luggage; there is always something slightly despicable in a pile of luggage. They will play tennis and bridge just as if they were at home and they will get up a concert in aid of the English Church Building Fund; no one here offers us any such diversions, and yet only a very dull mind could find the life here dull.

We arrived on a Saturday and discovered at once that the village was in a state of half suppressed excitement; the air was full of it. Girls sat upon doorsteps twining long wreaths of evergreens, there was a continual hurrying in and out of the church; the bells burst at intervals into abrupt and rather discordant mirth; and the stout curé sat in his balcony looking about him with an air of watchful supervision. We soon learned that a great event was impending. A young priest who had been born and bred in the village was coming next day to say his first mass in his own home. "Figure to yourself what an honour for us," said Célestine the waitress solemnly. "A child of the village,—and we shall hear him say mass to-morrow! It is not every commune that has such a privilege. You have not been inside the church yet? But it is worth seeing."

The church was a long ugly building, with a nondescript little tower to which was affixed a huge clock with only one hand; the villagers professed to be aabl to tell the time



by it, but a stranger could not pretend to such dexterity. The ceiling was painted blue and sprinkled with gilt stars, but apart from this effort at adornment the interior was bare and cold. To-day, however, it was recklessly decorated with banners and pictures and garlands and a profusion of pink and blue paper rosettes, while above the chancel arch, sweeping across the trivial prettiness of the paper flowers and the tawdry pictures, as the majestic tones of an organ across the whistling of a drum and fife band, ran the awful legend, *Tu es sacerdos in sæcula sæculorum*. We had no excuse for losing an hour of the fête. At four in the morning the bells began the curious jangling which represents rather than expresses a jubilant mind, and they continued with little intermission all day. When the bells were not ringing, and sometimes when they were, the three brass bands (our own and two contributed by neighbouring communes) played popular airs as loudly as possible; and they were supported by the firing of salutes and by the explosion of mortars planted in the churchyard. By half past eight the square was crowded by the men from the high pasturages who came trooping down, very smart and a little awkward in their Sunday clothes with a bit of gentian or edelweiss in their soft felt hats; the girls were already slipping into church, each one carrying her white veil folded in a clean handkerchief. By degrees the whole population with hardly an exception was packed into the building, leaving the village deserted and silent. The service over, the congregation streamed out, very hot and breathless, the girls shook out their veils and pinned them on, and presently a long procession was winding slowly round the *place*. In the midst of it under a gorgeous canopy walked the child of the village

arrayed in our own curé's huge yellow cope and carrying a large bouquet; behind him walked three older priests, followed by his godmother in a purple silk gown and his father and two brothers, important and smiling. The young priest looked pale and troubled; his eyes were reverently lowered so that perhaps he did not see how his comrades of the past stared at him with mingled admiration and sympathy. He had been singled out for a higher destiny than they; while they tilled their fields and herded their cattle, he would be sowing for eternity and shepherding souls heavenward; still, for all this there is a price to be paid, and the world after all is not such a bad world when one is young and the blood warm in one's veins.

We are very proud of our priest, but this is not the only respect in which we know ourselves superior to our neighbours. We have a gendarme for instance, a portly, middle-aged person, who may be seen any afternoon washing his lettuces at the trough in the middle of the *place* where an ever-flowing pipe provides us with an apparently inexhaustible supply of excellent water. At Quatre-Fontaines, Célestine informs us with visible satisfaction, they have never had a gendarme; if they required one they would have to send for ours. There is not very much for the gendarme to do; from time to time he puts on his uniform and stalks in an awe-inspiring manner about the *place*, but he prefers his shirt-sleeves and the seclusion of the restaurant. Sunday is the only day when he seems to have any official duty to perform. On Sunday the men always come down from the mountains to the nine o'clock mass which is followed by a procession. Everyone walks in the procession except the pair of athletic young giants who work

in the bakery and go to church but come out before the sermon. They sit smoking on the bakery bench while everyone else is listening to the pastoral discourse and when the procession approaches they fly up a side lane to avoid the curé's eye.

"What will you have?" says the forester, a tall blue-eyed man who carries his sixty years as alertly as though he had found some drops of the elixir of youth among the mountain snows. "In every community there are some evil doers; and in any case they do not belong to us,—they come from Saxon." By the time their devotions are over, the men are hot and thirsty, and the communal restaurant is close at hand; as the afternoon wears on they drink more than is good for them and grow noisy and quarrelsome, and the day closes occasionally with a free fight. These disorderly proceedings are a source of keen regret and annoyance to the older men of the community. "If they were hungry as well as thirsty when they come out of church, all would be well," says the forester apologetically. "But they eat nothing and they mix their drinks. After all, it is only once a week that they get the chance. And you must remember," he continues very earnestly, "that in other places, in Paris, in Saucerre, in London, for example, such scenes take place also, only there they are less public; here there is only the *place* and everything that is done is seen. It is a scandal all the same."

The behaviour of the gendarme on these occasions, in the eyes of the sober and orderly members of the community, leaves something to be desired. He is not permitted to perform his functions except in uniform, and when the disturbance begins he is invariably washing his salad in his shirt-sleeves, with his back to the animated scene. He does not seem

to observe the rising of the storm; within the restaurant doors the voices grow angrier, the tempers more inflamed, and presently a dozen or two of excited young men are inviting each other to "have it out" in the *place*; the gendarme lights a cigarette and tranquilly admires the flowers in the post-office garden. It is not until the stalwart disputants have begun to pitch the benches at each other that he turns round and becomes aware that heads are being broken and good homespun suits sadly ill-used within a yard or two of the representative of the law. With a heavy sigh he gathers up his lettuce leaves and retires to put on his uniform; but the gendarme is stout and the tunic was not made to measure; by the time that he has succeeded in encasing himself in it, the storm has pretty well spent itself, and there is little to do but to pick up the benches and lock the restaurant doors, and this he does in as authoritative a manner as could be wished. When Célestine is asked why it does not occur to him to interfere a little earlier, or why some penalty is not inflicted on the rioters for the credit of the village, she is surprised at the unreasonableness of foreigners. "But of course you do not know," she says, "that many of them are his own relations. Did you notice the young man who beat the president's son with the shutter? That is the gendarme's nephew. In return the president's son nearly tore off a leg of his trousers,—his quite new trousers—so there is not much to be said of that. And those that are not his relations,—well, it is better in this world to make friends than enemies; otherwise,—who knows!—he might get tapped on the head himself some dark night."

The forester takes a less lenient view of the gendarme's indulgence.

"In any case," he says sternly, "he ought to do his duty; an official should have no relations." And he mentions casually later on that the gendarme, like the bakers, is a stranger here; his home is a little further off than Saxon.

Saucerre is the little town at the foot of the valley, a dull little place of some four thousand inhabitants. Looking down on it from the mountain heights, it appears a whirlpool of gaiety and vice, and we talk of "the fashions of the plain" in a way which involuntarily recalls the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The present curé has been here ten years. His predecessor who had been here from time immemorial, ruled his parish with a heavy hand and was specially determined that his small domain should not be contaminated by the foolish vanity which prompted the ladies of the plain to wear hats of different shapes and sizes and to adorn them with feathers and flowers. When the new priest arrived the women thought the hour of revolt had struck. He was a young man, new to the district, of a genial disposition, and very ready to make friends with his new parishioners; and forthwith they cast off the ugly round straw hat with two long black ribbons floating from one side of it, which every woman had been doomed to wear during Father Cyrille's long reign, and appeared in church in brighter headgear. But they had mistaken their man. The genial young priest looked, frowned, and proceeded to pour upon them from the pulpit a flood of denunciation so terrible that it carried the gay ribbons and the fancy straws away for ever. "That was a sermon," says Célestine, shaking her head at the solemn memory of it. The ugly round hats were resumed, the revolt was over; and when a maid from one of the big hotels comes home to visit

her sisters they inspect her bonnet with quiet disapproval. How grateful they are to M. le Curé for saving them in spite of themselves from such diabolical snares! And yet . . . and yet . . .

One day we were invited to a theatrical performance, an event which took us quite by surprise. There had been an accident lower down in the valley and the entertainment was given in aid of the sufferers, under the special patronage of M. le Curé. We bought our tickets,—reserved seats, two francs—and were seated punctually at eight o'clock in the large room of the restaurant. The performance had been organised chiefly by the *chef* of the Sans-Souci, the landlady's son, a clever dark lad of seventeen, who was assisted by a friend from Geneva. The arrangement was Elizabethan in its simplicity. The few feet of space consecrated to the actors were divided from the front row of chairs only by a line chalked on the floor. There was no programme, no curtain; when it seemed desirable to conceal the actors' movements, a screen was set down before our prying eyes. It was not a very large screen and a few persons destitute of all nice feeling were guilty of the meanness of peeping round the corner and informing their friends what was happening. The entertainment began with half a dozen songs and recitals. The niece of the post mistress sang a pretty ballad, two children recited a dialogue, there were a couple of songs with choruses, and everyone displayed the most complete self-possession, and everyone was encored. Then we came to the chief business of the evening, the play. There were no women in it; the leading parts had been secured by M. Alfred, the young *chef*; and his friend from Geneva, and to the latter the only costume had been generously conceded.

There hurried on to the stage a remarkable figure in a grey tweed suit, with a pith helmet swathed in a white puggaree on his head and a Scotch plaid wound tightly round and round his shoulders; it took us a minute or two to realise that this was an Englishman in his usual travelling dress, but the rest of the house recognised him at once and greeted him with joyous applause. Presently we discovered further that the scene was laid in Turkey during some war not specified and that the personage in the plaid and the puggaree was a war correspondent, with a limited knowledge of French and a peculiar habit of finishing almost every sentence with "A'right." Another war correspondent soon appears, a Frenchman, very slim and active. The play turns upon the rivalry between the two, and the Frenchman's wit enables him to get the better of his clumsy antagonist at every turn. The Englishman orders a dinner and pays for it in advance ("*je payerai en avance*" is, it seems, the English traveller's favourite phrase,) and the Frenchman slips in and eats it behind his back; he robs him of the stout portmanteau which he carries with him everywhere; he lures him away from the telegraph office where he is telegraphing the book of Genesis (which every Englishman knows by heart) to his editor in order to keep possession of the wire while an important battle is being fought, and takes his place. The Englishman is furious, the Frenchman mocking and nimble; the Englishman insists upon fighting him but the Frenchman evades the encounter; he is not fond of fighting. Then suddenly the position is changed. A tremendous cannonading from behind the clothes-horse to the left tells us that the battle is being fought, and at the close of it the Frenchman is

discovered a prisoner in the Turkish camp. We never quite learned how he got there, partly because the sight of the curé repeating his evening prayers, rosary in hand, while his flock laughed and applauded around him, carried us for a moment away from the stage; but we were soon aware that the Turkish general, a stern warrior some four foot ten in height, whom we knew to be a Turkish general because he was dressed in a turban and a red blanket, was ordering M. Alfred off to instant execution, non-combatant though he was, in defiance of all rules of war. In this awful hour the prisoner turns to the man whom he has been successfully cheating through three acts. "Comrade," says he in a voice broken by emotion, "I leave my notebook with you; you will telegraph my report of the battle to my paper." The Englishman is almost as much agitated as his rival. "I will . . . a'right," he says solemnly. "Before my own."

This touches the journalist. "Oh, no," he says, "not before your own!" But the Englishman, grandly inconsiderate of his editor's feelings, repeats his assurance. Two diminutive Turks proceed to lead their prisoner forth; the miserable wretch bursts into tears, and this at last stirs the Englishman (still so slow!) to effective action. He reminds the Turk that the French Government will be very angry with him; the Turk does not care a snap for the French Government; he pleads in the name of justice and humanity, but the Pasha signs coldly to his minions to proceed. "Very good," the Englishman replies calmly. "Murder him then! But you shall not murder him alone; and the British Government will avenge us both. Fire! *Je mourrai avec!* A'right." And with that he throws himself, plaid, puggaree and all, upon

the Frenchman and clasps him in a fervent embrace.

The prolonged applause from the back of the hall drowned the next few sentences, and I do not know whether the Turk was melted by the Englishman's devotion or afraid of our Government's vengeance; but the prisoner was released without more ado and went off arm in arm with his preserver, leaving us to reflect upon the Portrait of an Englishman which had been so vivaciously presented to us. Dull, clumsy, irascible, the easy dupe of the smart swindler, and with it all so generous, so fearless,—there was light as well as shade in the picture. But I confess that it was not one which appealed to a

Swiss audience. The Swiss are a practical people, they can find nothing to admire in a fool, and their Englishman was certainly a fool; they evidently regarded the cry, "*Je mourrai avec,*" as an absurdity only appropriate to an absurd character. When I congratulated M. Alfred's mother next day upon her son's admirable acting, she replied to my compliment by hoping that the play had not hurt anyone's feelings. "It was only a joke," she said, with gentle anxiety. "It did not offend you? We should be so sorry if we had offended; and we know of course that Englishmen are not really like that."

H. C. MACDOWALL.

#### BLACKBIRDS AT LANCING.

No light steals o'er the upland grey  
To glimmer on the eastern bay,  
Silent and dark, beneath the down  
Sleeps the great, gaudy, joyless town.

Here, too, falls slumber's sweet release,  
The jaded village breathes in peace,  
And dreamland visions once again  
Cheat the strained eyes of mortal men.

But, hark! there rises in the night  
A clear low chuckle of delight,  
A cry, a chorus bold and free,  
That quells the moaning of the sea.

Here, 'midst their ancient haunts, they throng  
(In sheer delirium of song)  
The sentry elms that guard the lawn—  
Those wild comedians of the dawn!

*Blackbirds at Lancing.*

No tender robin whispers there  
A fluttering hope, a faint despair.  
No spell binds, like the wondrous note  
Poured from the night-bird's golden throat.

They warble, wrangle, and debate,  
Complain, exult, expostulate,  
And challenge to the morning give,  
Quaint, eerie, interrogative.

Softness and fire blend in the strain—  
The sigh of doubt, the sob of pain,  
A psalm of rest, a shout of strife—  
As motley and as mixed as life.

One I loved well, oft here with me,  
Heard this aerial harmony,  
One whom wild blooms and sylvan lay  
Touched to fine feeling, pure and gay.

Earth's blossoms blow for him no more,  
The lyrics of the woods are o'er,  
In God's green acre—deadly still—  
He lies below our sunset hill.

Yet, haply, in his calm apart  
Music and beauty bathe his heart,  
And give back, in diviner way,  
The flutes of March, the flowers of May.

JOSEPH TRUMAN.



THE PLEASURES OF THE TABLE.<sup>1</sup>

THE present age has long since been denounced as Alexandrian. We are all devoted (so we have been told) to the examination and criticism of whatever exists, and though we are gifted with a keen appreciation of what has been achieved in the past, we lack the instinct and energy to create. In other words we are more apt to write history than to make it, and it is therefore the more remarkable that a vast province of research is almost untouched. Most of the arts have found a hundred historians; there is one—the art of eating—which still awaits its chronicler. Nor can this neglect be excused by lack of material or opportunity. The records of the kitchen and of the palate are complete. We know how the ancients ate and what they paid for their dainties. Athenæus and others have not only displayed the art of table-talk as it was practised in ancient times; they have reduced it to a practice, and though some of their dishes seem too highly perfumed for our palate, we cannot but admire their conduct of a banquet. And as we approach down the slope of time nearer to our own age, we shall find still fuller and more eloquent records. Long before the cookery-books discover their secrets to our gaze, we have the surer evidence of letters, journals and accounts, while the labours of the Historical Manuscripts Commission have revealed the taste of our forefathers as well as their

political opinions. Moreover, there is a sound reason why the art of cooking should attract the philosophic historian: cookery, like architecture or poetry, has its alternations of "classic" and "gothic" and devoutly follows the artistic tendencies of successive periods. It is therefore just as well adapted as any of the other arts to illustrate the progress of human thought, the growth of human intelligence. But, despite these truths the historian tarries, and we think that the professors of history in our universities, deserting for a while the thrice-told tale of martial prowess, might sketch the pleasures of the table after the scientific method which is so dear to their hearts.

When we first turned over the pages of Mr. Ellwanger's book, we hoped that he had supplied what the advertisements call "a long-felt want." But we hoped in vain. His book is as loosely put together as its rivals. It touches lightly enough upon ancient and modern, but its author's knowledge and patience are both at fault, and he has only added another to a long list of desultory works. Nevertheless, he has collected a vast array of curious, if disconnected, facts, and though he seldom rises to the height of his subject, he has given us no small occasion for thought. To the ancients he does but scant justice, since he knows them, we suspect, at second-hand; and he permits his just admiration for the French School to belittle the achievements of the Greeks. Yet it is to the Greeks that we owe the art of cookery, as all the other arts, and without their august example

<sup>1</sup> THE PLEASURES OF THE TABLE, An Account of Gastronomy from Ancient Days to Present Times, by G. H. Ellwanger. W. Heinemann, London, 1903.

we might still have been no better than the barbarians, who eat their meat raw. Archestratus for instance, fragments of whose poem upon gastronomy survive, was a real epicure, and he so truly understood the art of dining that he would allow no more than four others to share his meal. But it is to Athenæus that we owe our real knowledge of the Greek kitchen, for he (though he wrote in the third century) preserved for us the traditions of an earlier time; and yet to-day Athenæus belongs rather to the philologist than to the cook. Indeed, the ideal edition of his *Deipnosophists* would need for its proper production the learning of the scholar and the skill of a well-tried chef. A *batterie de cuisine* is no less necessary to its elucidation than a lexicon, and until head and hand combine, we may despair of understanding his discursive text.

From Greece the art of cooking travelled to Rome, where its delicacy was overwhelmed by the vulgar display and wanton extravagance of millionaires. The Roman pro-consul, when he had pillaged a province, was more intent upon spending vast sums of money than upon living like a gentleman. A fish, which had not cost a hundred pounds, was deemed scarce worth eating by these epicurean money-bags, and one Emperor was vulgar enough to cheapen a delicacy by thrusting it in vast quantities upon a reluctant populace. Yet Rome produced the two types of banqueter, Lucullus, who worshipped the refinement of his palate as a god, and Trimalchio, for whom a dinner was an opportunity of absurd boasting and monstrous largesse. A French poet has dared to prefer Trimalchio to Lucullus, a preference which shows the poet's indifference to the pleasures of the table. Yet, if we may say so without incurring the charge of

heresy, Lucullus in his appetite was something of a prig. The man who, dining alone, could boast that Lucullus was dining with Lucullus, displayed a superiority of mind, and a lofty egoism which are not altogether agreeable to contemplate. Trimalchio, on the other hand, is pictured by the satirist as a good-natured extravagant buffoon, and his banquet will remain until the end of time the greatest example of plebeian magnificence. There was no dish at this memorable banquet which did not show an amazing ingenuity. The Opimian wine, labelled "a hundred years old," is a fine sample of its humorous pretence. The first course was a hen carved in wood, from beneath which, to the sound of music two servants drew pea-hen's eggs and distributed them to the company. The guests, dismayed by Trimalchio's warning, "I'm afraid they are half hatched," broke the eggs with a certain diffidence. Yet they need have had no fear, for when they searched further they found in each a delicate fat ortolan in the middle of a well peppered yolk. But the invention of the second course easily surpassed the brood hen of the first: there was carried in a vast tray which had about it the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and upon each side the cook had laid a suitable dish—upon Taurus a piece of beef, upon Capricorn a lobster, upon Pisces a pair of mullets, and, when the upper part of the tray was removed, there were found beneath stuffed fowls, a hare, larded with fins of fish so that it looked like a flying horse, and a school of fish brought from the river Euripus upon which four images spouted a relishing sauce.

Thus the satirist describes a banquet which was also a farce, a banquet, indeed, which should not have tempted even the most reckless roysterers to imitation. Yet the experiment was

made at Lützenburg in 1702, by the ladies and gentlemen of the court. The orgie, which was described by no less a person than Leibnitz in a letter addressed to the Princess Louise of Hohenzollern, reproduced with absolute fidelity, not only the banquet, but the table talk of Trimalchio, and it suggests a curious familiarity of manners, that a learned philosopher should give an unvarnished account of such a spectacle to a princess. But, for the rest, the Roman banquets were rather an affair of money than of taste. We hear that a red mullet, weighing four and a half pounds, was sold for a fabulous sum. Vitellius spent three thousand pounds daily on his dinner, while Apicius was said to review upon his table the whole animal kingdom. In fact the epicures of Rome esteemed nothing that was not out of season or brought from afar. It is plain, therefore, that Imperial Rome understood not the art of dining, and when, after the sleep of the Middle Ages, the world awoke again, it went back to an earlier example and a purer taste to revive the pleasures of the table.

When we descend to more modern times we shall find that the cookery of France dominated Europe. Now and again our English Kings proved their respect for the kitchen by some act of conspicuous favour. Henry the Eighth, for instance, is said to have rewarded a cook who invented a new dish with a manor. But such appreciation was rare indeed, and the few gourmets whom England produced, either found their cooks in France or sent them thither to be trained. To take a single instance from the eighteenth century: we find from the Belvoir manuscripts that the Duke of Rutland's cook, one Jones, received instructions in the Duke of Orleans' kitchen, which was regarded as the best school in France,

as well as in the kitchen of the Archbishop of Narbonne. But this enterprise was not common, and it is of itself a clear acknowledgment of France's superiority. In truth, what was rare in London was the invariable custom of Paris, where so brave an enthusiast as Vatel, who killed himself because some sea-fish arrived at Chantilly too late for dinner, aroused little surprise. But Vatel took himself and his craft with perfect seriousness. Trimalchio called his carver *Carpus*, that a single word might be both a summons and a command. Vatel would have been incapable of jesting thus on a serious subject, and his sketch of a carver, quoted by Mr. Ellwanger, is as good an example as can be found of his grave style.

The carver should be well bred [says he] inasmuch as he should maintain a first rank among the servants of his master. Pleasing, civil, amiable and well-disposed, he should present himself at table with his sword by his side, his mantle on his shoulder and his napkin on his left arm, though some are in the habit of placing it on the guard of their sword in an unobjectionable manner. He should make his obeisance when approaching the table, proceed to carve the viands, and divide them understandingly according to the number of the guests. . . . A carver should be very scrupulous in his deportment, his carriage should be grave and dignified, his appearance cheerful, his eye serene, his head erect and well-combed.

That is to say, he must have as many graces as a Spanish bull-fighter; he must handle his knives, not only with skill, but with elegance. Nor is this spirit of gravity yet dead in France. Monsieur Vatel's character of a carver may be matched by the character of a Maître d'Hôtel, drawn but a year ago by the late Monsieur Joseph. "A dish learnedly prepared by an incomparable cook," said Monsieur Joseph, "might pass unseen, or at least unappreciated, if the

Maitre d'Hôtel, who becomes for the nonce a kind of stage-manager, did not know how to present the masterpiece in such a fashion as to make it desirable"; and Monsieur Joseph, in demanding that each dish should be placed upon the table with a suave diplomacy, proves that he was animated with the same spirit as Vatel, that, in other words, the old French tradition is as strong as ever.

The French, moreover, have not merely looked upon cooking as an art, they have reduced it to a science, while Monsieur Savarin, whose work is of no practical utility, still showed that the table, like every other province of human activity, had a philosophy of its own. But it was Monsieur Reynière, who, in his *ALMANACH DES GOURMANDS*, first combined in one work the art and science of the kitchen. Not content to explain the composition of his masterpieces, and to sketch banquets worthy of himself and his friends, he invented aphorisms, which Savarin himself need not have disdained. At the outset he takes a proper view: "the kitchen," says he, "is a country in which there are always discoveries to be made." Being a Frenchman, he knows that every dish needs a relish, and declares that, "without sauces a dinner were as bare as a house which has been levied on by the sheriff's officers." Yet he does not disdain pastry, which, says he, "is to the kitchen what figures of rhetoric are to discourse. An oration without figures and a dinner without pastry are equally insipid." As to the superstitions which are wont to frighten timid diners, he will have none of them. He only dreads thirteen at table "when there is only enough to go round for twelve," and he is indifferent to an overturned salt-cellar, so long as it is not upset in a good dish.

But in truth the kitchen of France has never lacked its artists, and—despite the prophet of decline whose voice has been heard in every century—you may dine as well in Paris to-day as in the classic age. But the practice is not limited to Paris; it is diffused from end to end of the country. Not only has every province its peculiar sauces and special dishes, but there are few villages where you need despair of a palatable repast. Not long since we found ourselves in a remote Breton village, which rejoiced in no public monuments and had no attraction wherewith to tempt the tourist. Yet here we found a restaurant, which, had it been in a metropolis, would have been justly famous, and the provincial artist who controlled it not only knew how to design a dinner, but had written an erudite treatise upon his art. Such an experience would be impossible in England, and it is not easy to explain the difference between the two countries. Of course national temperament counts for much, and the Latin races have a far better understanding of what Milton calls "the arts that polish life" than the less imaginative Teutons. But there was a time when the popular kitchen of England could provide something else than a chop or a steak and a boiled potato. Our forefathers of the sixteenth century ate perhaps rather coarsely, but their table was not only liberal but various. Sir William Fairfax, for instance, as we know from the last volume published by the Historical Manuscript Commission, had a Gargantuan feast upon Christmas Day, 1572. His first course consisted

of brawn and mustard, formenty, boiled mallards, boiled knuckles of veal, numble pies, peasecods, a roast chine of beef, roast veal, roast swan, roast turkey, roast pig, cold crane pie, roast capon, and baked venison.

The second course was, for the most part, a repetition of the first, consisting of

gilly, roast conies, roast mallard, roast teals, one roast partridge, cold turkey pie, one roast woodcock, and a tart.

To our more modest appetites this seems an heroic feast, especially as it was eaten early in the day, and after a breakfast of brawn and mustard, beef and beer. Nor were the Scots an inch behind the English in gluttony. The young and beautiful Emilie, the heroine of *PHILORUS* (1603) stanch'd her morning thirst with a cup of Malmsey, took "three garden gowps of the air" and was then ready for a breakfast which consisted of a pair of plovers piping hot, a partridge and a quail, and a cup of sack. But throughout the seventeenth century the English took a keen interest in what they ate and drank. The eminently learned Sir Kenelm Digby left behind him several ways of making metheglin, cider and cherry wine together with excellent directions for cookery; while his friend and contemporary, James Howell, when on his travels, noted the dishes as well as the customs of foreign countries. The *olla podrida* of Spain inspired him to a rare eloquence. He recommends to Lady Cornwallis a cook who had seen the world abroad, and would

tell your ladyship, that the reverend matron, the *olla podrida* hath intellectuals and senses; Mutton, Beef and Bacon, are to her as the Will, Understanding and Memory are to the soul: Cabbage, Turnips, Artichokes, Potatoes, and Dates are her five Senses, and Pepper the Commonsense. She must have marrow to keep Life in her, and some Birds to make her light; by all means she must go adorned with chains of sausages.

But, while the English of the seventeenth century loaded their

tables with many meats, they did not neglect the use of strange and aromatic herbs. Their dishes must have resembled the dishes of Charles the Fifth, which, when the carver came to cut them up, filled not only the dining-room but all the apartments of his palace and the adjoining streets with an aromatic vapour. In one of the ancient books of receipts, which are still to be seen in manuscript in country houses, we find coriander seed, ambergris, rosemary, pimpernel and powdered myrrh all used in the making of confections. But, as Addison and Steele simplified the English tongue, so their contemporaries simplified the English kitchen, and while the eighteenth century eliminated the sauces in which our older forefathers delighted, they abolished the strange meats, and stranger pies, which gave a character to the cooking of England and of the Tudors and Stuarts. In other words the bill of fare became as narrowly limited as the vocabulary of the British Essayists, and had it not been for the sudden rise to popularity of the French style, we might all be eating beef and cabbage, and nothing else, unto this day.

It is true that the nobles of England had for long employed cooks trained abroad, but it was not until the era of the Napoleonic wars that England began to get her cooks, whence she already got her fashions, from Paris. The most famous of his time was Louis Eustache Ude, who, having once presided over the kitchen of Madame Bonaparte, came to London to instruct the barbarians in his art. For a while he was employed by the Duke of York, but it was at Crockford's that he made his reputation, and his skill did at least as much as the passion of play to entice the gamblers of London to St. James's Street. Moreover, his cele-



brated treatise, *THE FRENCH COOK*, spread the light in unnumbered households, and it is evident, even in the fiction of the age, that cookery had at last won its place among the fine arts in London itself. Bulwer, who echoed the tune of his time, sketched a dinner in *PELHAM* which would have done credit to the kitchens of the ancients. He admits that the study has not progressed, and quotes the venerable Ude, whom he pledges in a bumper, to the effect that cookery possesses but few innovators. Both Pelham and Lord Guloseton discuss their dinner with a proper enthusiasm, protesting the while that cooking is not capable of becoming a written science, but is the philosophy of practice. "Ah, by Lucullus," exclaims Pelham, "what a visionary *béchamelle*! Oh, the inimitable sauce! These chickens are indeed worthy of the honour of being dressed;" and in the same tone of enthusiasm he declares that the lusciousness of a pear resembles the style of the old English poets. But it is Disraeli who does the fullest justice to the artistic dignity of the cook. There is no spice of caricature in his sketch of Leander and Papa Prevost. Leander, it will be remembered, dressed such a dinner at Montacute Castle that even his marmitons were overcome with emotion. "When it was finished," complains Papa Prevost, "Leander retired to his room; I attended him; he covered his face with his hands. Would you believe it, my Lord! not a word; not even a message. All this morning Leander has waited in the last hope. Nothing, absolutely nothing! How can he compose when he is not appreciated! Had it been appreciated, he would to-day not only have repeated the *Escalop à la Bellamont*, but perhaps even invented what might have outdone it. It is unheard of, my Lord."

No wonder Lord Eskdale made what apology was possible, an apology which the artist took in the best spirit. "If we were but understood," said he, "a dinner would become a sacrifice to the Gods, and the Kitchen would be a Paradise."

But despite the enthusiasm of the novelists, despite also the precept and example of Francatelli and Soyer, the art of the table did not find much encouragement in England; and to-day it would be difficult beyond the boundaries of London to find a dinner in tavern or hotel that is worth eating. Travellers hesitate to explore the British Islands because they are afraid that they will find nothing to eat save cold beef or eggs and bacon. For the total disappearance of palatable food from our country inns, we are told, the railways are to blame. But this explanation is insufficient. Something also must be allowed for defective education, and for that facile content, which is only another form of ignorance. The contrast is all the sharper because with the aid of German hotel-keepers and French cooks, we may dine as well in London as in Paris. But in our English provinces we cannot dine; we can but eat; and unless enterprise correct the deficiency the romantic beauties of our country will remain unexplored as Timbuctoo. Meanwhile there is one hope of regeneration. The motor-car will presently restore something of their ancient life to our high roads. Between the hedges, where once rattled the old stage-coach, sprint and splutter the new machines of France driven by oil or electricity; and the amateurs of the new "sport" will not be content with the rough and simple fare provided for the rare pedestrian. Who knows, therefore, but there may be a revival of the lost art? Perhaps within a few years a French hireling will make an omelette or cook a



*chateaubriand* in the remoter corners of England. Then indeed the motor-car will not have made its clatter in vain; Englishmen will once more learn that "good things were not only made for fools," and that Dr. Johnson's sentence was well justified. "Sir," said the Doctor, "I look upon it that he who does not mind his belly can hardly mind anything else;" and certainly this neglect of the kitchen is one of the worst signs of our national indifference.

When we turn from England to France, how great is the change! The Frenchman indeed, undisturbed by the scruples of a belated puritanism, most properly conceives it his duty to make the best of every day. He believes too that the working hours are but leading to that happy moment, when, with his napkin securely tucked under his chin, he will peruse the eloquent periods of the bill of fare; and, though he be not guilty of the *Vicomte de Vieil-Castel's* extravagance, who for a wager spent five hundred francs on a single dinner, he will find no lack of variety in the dishes set before him. Being an artist he will never choose a succession of dainties which clash one with the other; he will compose his dinner as an orator composes a speech, with due regard to the exordium, the middle, and the peroration; and the intellectual labour thus involved will give an additional flavour to the well ordered repast. We cannot hope to vie with the French in the pleasures of the table. A nation whose very prisons were once served by accomplished cooks must always remain without a rival; and let it not be forgotten that the governor of the old Bastille had so tender a regard for his inmates'

comfort, that he was unhappy if they did not dine like gentlemen every day. But at least we may follow a good example afar off, and, even if we cannot introduce the cooking of France, we might at least revive the liberal style of our forefathers.

The history of cooking, then, has a practical, as well as an antiquarian interest, and it is impossible to turn over Mr. Ellwanger's pages without a sincere regret for the past. Nor does the style of the cookery books which he quotes fall one whit below their substance. They have a flavour of epic simplicity which we cannot too highly commend. "First catch your hare!" What command could be briefer or more direct? For more than a century Mrs. Glass has lived upon the fame of having said it, and now Mr. Ellwanger with perfect justice robs her of the glory. She did not say it at all. It is true that, in her chapter on roast pork, she urges the cook to "stick his pig just above the breast bone"; but, as Mr. Ellwanger tells us, it is Beauvilliers who claims the credit of having written, in a recipe for hare pie, the immortal words: "*Ayez un lièvre.*" But the worst of the recipes are distinguished by an imperious style, which makes them the best of good reading. Napoleon wrote, as though he held a sword in his hand, not a pen; so the cooks of all ages have written as though their hands held nothing less formidable than a ladle or a knife; and it is for this reason no less than for the love of a good dinner that we hope a competent historian will gravely succeed, where Mr. Ellwanger has so pleasantly failed, and give us the annals of the table seriously written, and pompously supported by documents.

## TWO PEOPLES AND A PROPHECY.

In the Hausa States, up the Niger River, there are two Peoples. These two peoples live, not each in its own territory, not each in a distinct part of the country, but side by side each in every part of it. Wherever the Hausa is, there also is the Fulani; wherever the Fulani is, there also is the Hausa. They are two distinct races, but they live together. In some towns there is the Hausa quarter and there is the Fulani quarter; but even in these you find many of each race living outside the quarters in huts and compounds built next door to one another. They intermingle freely in all the natural intercourse of daily life, but there are two languages. They are only just beginning to intermarry to any considerable extent, so there are two types of faces. There is the flat nose of the darker skinned Hausa and there is the straight nose with the oriental hook at the end of it of the lighter skinned Fulani. The Hausa is the farmer, the spinner, the weaver, the dyer, the artificer, the hunter, the trader; the Fulani is the organiser, the law-officer, the tax-gatherer, the priest. Each race thinks itself superior, and each race in its heart despises the other. The Hausa tills the soil, spins cotton, weaves it into thin strips to be sewn together into flowing robes of many colours, spends weeks patiently adorning his clothes with needlework patterns, tans leather and works it up into highly ornamental articles of daily use, hammers household utensils out of tin, brass and copper, carves gourds and paddles, chips out huge canoes, fishes, hunts and has the con-

scious pride of labour, useful labour which produces material comforts for himself. Above all he trades. He can strike a bargain and get the better of the smartest Arab in the caravan. He travels huge distances with his wares and comes back to his own land and townsmen with the greater pride and sense of superiority which only travel gives. He settles down under the oppressor with the philosophy of the man who has been in many lands and has found the oppressor in all.

The Fulani has a different pride; his is the pride of temporal power, the pride of the organiser, the ruler, the pride of education, the pride of the governing race. Even before he had the power the Fulani had the pride—the pride of the gypsy. In the beginning the Fulani in Haussaland was nomadic. He did not scratch in the hot sun in the yamfields; he did not get covered with mud in the fish traps; he did not chase wild animals which gave but a poor return for the exertion and risk. He did not sit and work in the dirt at the forge or under the loom all day or harden his fingers with the hammer, the knife or the needle for a small pittance. Lazy but astute, poor but too proud to work, the Fulani in those days despised the Hausa just as the gypsy despises the navvy at home, and like the gypsy held aloof, driving his cattle wherever the young grass grew, and exchanging the milk, flesh and hides of his herds for whatever the Hausa had to offer. In other neighbouring countries, races of the Fulani stock may have had power and been impor-

tant peoples; it may be that round about Haussaland the lighter-skinned relatives of the Fulani have ruled for centuries as some think they have; but in Haussaland the Fulani was but a gypsy a few hundred years ago. Despised and despising he wandered about among the little principalities and kingdoms, retaliating when he was injured but never making himself seriously felt.

It was a wonderful country this Haussaland a few centuries ago, then at its height of importance, and it is a wonderful country now. It poured its produce and its manufactures across the desert into Europe when Europe was half civilised, and it pours them into the same channel still—the morocco leather of commerce comes from Kano. Once it was as far ahead of Europe as it has now been left behind. It was once the Factory of the Mediterranean just as Morocco was the Granary of Europe. Everything about the Haussa as he is to-day points to a by-gone civilisation long forgotten, a civilisation of which his present arts and crafts are but traces. The patterns of the workers in brass, leather and cotton are no longer designs; they have lost their purpose and their backbone is gone; they are but fragments of finer schemes, mere scraps of careful effects, memories of a lost art. But the brazen ewers are not savage any more than the heavier brass work of India, the hieroglyphics of Egypt or the long gun of the Arab. They belong to a civilisation, of the past, it is true, but none the less a civilisation. It has left no temples, no pyramids; but then it had no lime. Its arts and crafts have been left behind by Birmingham; but then it had no machinery. It lived and survived through periods in which the Gothic invasion would have been but an ordinary incident. It was a

mighty civilisation, and those who built it up were, are now, and will for ages be a mighty people.

Can we call a people savage which has a written language of its own, a language which is used to-day, and which after much controversy is admitted to be of older origin than Arabic? It has been suggested that it was merely a corruption of Arabic, but that cannot be maintained for two thirds of it is older than Arabic. Nor can we call a people savage which has such an inborn trading instinct. The trader of Africa, the Haussa, is found now, as he has been found for a thousand years, from the Mediterranean to the Oil Rivers, from Morocco to the Nile. Everything about the Haussa indicates a past of splendour, wealth and power. We do not know how long he has been in his land. We do not know whether he is indigenous, or whether he migrated from some other part of the Dark Continent. We do not know whether he made his own civilisation, or whether he merely brought it with him from some other land, when he wandered into this. We do not know whether it grew with him, or whether it has been taught to him, whether he learned it himself, or was driven into it by some invading race, long ago absorbed. The Haussa has been in Haussaland longer than can be traced, and, in spite of the everlasting intertribal warfare, in spite of raiders, in spite of pestilence, has multiplied exceedingly and kept his nationality, absorbing all comers. Like the Anglo-Saxon, he gathered into his stock all the tribes and peoples, great or small, which attacked him or wandered into his land, swamping, absorbing and assimilating them all—all except the Fulani.

We do not know where the Fulani came from. He may be a Moor or a Berber; he may be part of the

Moorish race which, spreading to the edge of that great Empire, wandered out of it. There are distinct traces in Haussaland of Moorish influence; the peculiar spouted earthen water-pot of Haussaland is the counterpart of that used to-day by the peasants in the south of Spain. Or he may be from Egypt; the cattle he tends are similar to the humped cattle of the Nile. The presumption is that he has an ancient history but there is little in the way of proof. There is no written language, and the various theories have but little to rest upon. There is nothing but conjecture at the best, and it is as likely as not that his beginning was insignificant, and that he has never been greater than he was a hundred years ago. It is not improbable that he was altogether a nomad, a wandering tribe of the desert. This beginning would not be out of the way; the Hebrew race had no better. Such tribes are rising to-day just as they have been rising for thousands of years; north Africa is not a land of change. A tribe may start to-day in fifty ways. A favourite slave-boy, sharp-witted and strong, learns all there is to be learnt of the management of men in one of the countless mud-palaces of the Soudan. Some small incident may drive him away. A rebuke, a punishment, trouble with a woman, ambition, the spirit of unrest, the death of his master, any of these things may make an Ishmael of him and send him wandering amongst the villages. There, finding that he possesses a sharper intellect and greater experience than the heathen all round him, he very soon gathers a following, which, if once started it escapes misfortune, soon becomes formidable. Instead of the runaway slave you may have a deposed tyrant driven by the usurper from the oasis of his

fathers, an unsuccessful claimant to a throne, a rebel, an escaped criminal; you may have a military commander shattered in some great fight (many such men vanished from the field of Omdurman, swallowed up by the desert for a season or for good) you may have a madman, a Mahdi, or a mere marauder. North Africa is full of them all; quite recently Morocco may have sent several such broken leaders on their way. If the Sultan had been defeated by the Pretender, he and many of his big men might have slipped into the desert, and similarly the Pretender himself might have done the same.

Wherever the Fulani came from, he was not absorbed by the Haussa. He came and he despised, but he stayed and he kept to himself. The land was good, and the cattle thrived. The ground yielded treble crops, and so it was with the increase of his herds, and as the cattle multiplied, so it was with the Fulani. Cattle became currency and the Fulani became rich. Then the pride of his wealth increased his contempt for the feckless Haussa. The little states, never united, were ever at war with one another. War was then, as it is now, an expensive proceeding. Then as now states indulged in more of it than their exchequers warranted. The Fulani, as a gypsy, kept to the peaceful patches and there benefited by the surrounding strife. In time the Haussa kings found that more could be got by bargaining with the Fulani than by raiding him, and so, as the needs of the petty principalities became more pressing, the gypsy became the Jew. This he might be to-day but for the rise of Othman, the Napoleon of Haussaland, by whose agency the Fulani, first the gypsy and then the Jew, ultimately became the aristocrat of the country.

Even while Buonaparte was con-

quering Europe, Othman, his anti-type, was founding another empire on the Niger, an empire which was not to wane until the Germans were on the Boulevards. Othman was a Fulani who, having for some time provided petty kings with the sinews of war, conceived the advantages of fighting for himself and of getting the profits of the principal as well as the commission of the agent. We have only a general outline of his career, but it probably began with wealth and it certainly ended in power. The Haussa kings, jealous of one another, went down one by one before this unexpected conqueror and bowed their heads to the power they had turned against one another so often in the past. Othman succeeded beyond all possible dreams. It was a mighty life work, to come into the world a member of a homeless race, a lender of money, a mercenary fighter of other men's quarrels, and to leave it the temporal and the spiritual head, the arbitrary master, of a consolidated people, the lord of an empire rivalling that of the Moor at its best. The Moor, conquering half Spain and almost reaching Egypt, ruled a greater territory but fewer people than did the Sultan of Sokoto, whose word was law to millions, and whose power extended from Lake Chad almost to the lakes of the Upper Niger, from the sands of the desert almost to the sands of the sea.

Having conquered, this dark Napoleon, like the white one, set himself to administer. Among his own race he found his material. Everywhere he appointed governors and petty governors of his own people. The officials, military, civil, fiscal and judicial, from the highest to the lowest—all were Fulani. The original Haussa made no objection. Just as the Fulani had dwelt with him before, tending the cattle of the

country, living beside him but keeping to himself, so the Fulani continued, carrying on the administration and protection of the country. It was not perhaps to the Fulani mind much of a change, this step from cattle to Haussas, from cattle which fed, bred and fattened by natural instinct, to men who planted, reaped and were robbed, and planted and reaped again, who dealt in goods which did not, like herds, carry themselves about, who hammered patiently at a cookpot and grew excited over the capture of a fish. But we do not know, for there were no historians there to chronicle every action and analyse every motive of *this* Napoleon. We do not know how much the Haussa was beaten in fair fight or how far he was outmanœuvred by this master mind, or how much the terrible religious zeal of the Mahommedan helped him to extend his conquests even with the aid of the conquered. We know he waged a religious war, we know that conversion to Mahommedanism was the first condition of surrender, though tribute to Sokoto was the next. This was indeed a master mind. We see it in his choice of a capital. The great Haussa citadel was Kano; that was the centre of trade, the chief town of Haussaland, the national meeting-place of the Haussa. Not there was the Fulani centre fixed, but at Sokoto, two hundred miles to the west, a little away from the most fertile land and the densest population. Here the maker of the new power in the land established the religious and military headquarters of the new governing race. It is obvious now that it would not have been nearly so safe to take advantage of the ready made conveniences of Kano, that it would not have been so wise to station the new power with all its unavoidable arrogance among



what was left of the old one, among the memories of the departed glories of the beaten race. We see now how much safer the new dynasty was, in a town of its own and surrounded by none but its own people than it would have been near the hum of the Hausa hive. We see it now—the Fulani saw it then.

So started the power of Sokoto. How will it end? For years, for generations, the Fulani has kept apart from the Hausa; but as his power has waned the distinction has grown less, until the true Fulani blood is not nearly so common as it was; the blending of the races has begun. The Fulani as a separate race may not survive; but he is not to be spoken of lightly. We must not forget what an advantage to the country the Fulani dynasty has been. The Fulani collected his tribute in slaves but he protected the land from outsiders, and though he made Haussaland a slave ground, it was strictly preserved. The raider from the coast was kept away, and the Yankee only got the Pagan coast negro for his cotton plantations. It was said that under Othman a woman could carry goods on her head unmolested from end to end of the land, and the same thing is said to-day under us. The Fulani first pacified by the power of the sword and then established courts of law; we have established courts of justice first and only called in force to maintain their authority when necessary. Our task has been, not to conquer the people, but at most to drive out a few unjust rulers; it has not been a conquest, it has been an occupation. And so the power of right is supplanting the power of might.

Without the English, without the light of European civilisation, Haussaland would decline and relapse into callousness, but with them it will

flourish again and the Hausa will recover at least his equality with the Fulani. In England we cannot form any idea of the greatness of Hausa trade. We should be surprised if we knew the annual turnover of some of those whom we in ignorance call "mere native traders." Trade is reviving wherever the British flag has gone, just as it did wherever the Fulani had conquered. Never in the native memory has the river Benue been so full of trading canoes as it is to-day. With cash for currency, with goods as the measure of wealth, the Hausa will feel his power again, the power of numbers and of production. The pride of the Fulani has been broken, and at last the Hausa will absorb the conqueror. It has never taken so long before, but even the Fulani will be absorbed and will take in the history of Haussaland the rank taken by the Dane in the history of England. The Fulani may not survive as the Fulani; but long after his name is forgotten his work will bear fruit, and in the strengthening of the Hausa stock he will live for ever.

If you moved among the people and got into their confidence, you could lead them on to talk about a prophecy, a prophecy of which you would hear nothing unless you won their affection and respect. But if you succeeded in drawing them out, the people would tell you of something which was and is part of their faith—and it is this: "On his death-bed Othman, the great Fulani, the first Sultan of Sokoto, the spiritual head of the revealed religion, saw the future in a vision and told it to his priests that all might know what was to come. *His dynasty was to last for a hundred years; the sixteenth Sultan of Sokoto would reign but for a day; then would come the day of a foreign Power for four years, and then the Mahdi and the Millennium.*"



It may be that there was no prophecy, but the people believe there was. It may be that the legend of the prophecy only grew as the power of the Fulani declined, but everything it foretold has happened. This is the hundredth year—and the people knew it as it came; the fifteenth Sultan of Sokoto died as the year began—and when he died, when the hundred years had passed, the glory of Sokoto had already departed. It is doubtful whether there was then any tribute whatever sent in from the once faithful states. We can well understand how this would be, how much such a prophecy would hasten the end of a waning power by emboldening many to refuse allegiance who otherwise would never dare to do so. When we consider that the waning of the Fulani power exactly coincided with the period fixed by the prophecy, we see how dramatic the death of the fifteenth Sultan was. But dramatic as it was, it was nothing to what followed. With the fifteenth Sultan dead and the sixteenth to reign but for a *day* (a word with a special oriental elasticity), and with the people looking for the next step, we might,—knowing that what a people looks for it generally finds, or thinks it does—have expected something approaching a fulfilment of the prophecy, but hardly so exact and remarkable a fulfilment as actually has occurred.

To explain it properly we must go back and consider how events had shaped in Northern Nigeria for the last few years. As the hundredth year approached and the age of the fifteenth Sultan increased the people had not far to look for the foreign power. There were no less than four—the Senoussi, the Germans, the French and the English, standing round like vultures waiting for the feast. The struggle between them

must have been the subject of much head-shaking among the seers and soothsayers of the land. Fate would have one, and there were four eager to answer her beckoning. The English were first in the field and, having control of the water-ways had the best position, but we did not hold it without effort after effort. The first to challenge us were the French. As we came over the sea from the south and up the river and established ourselves on its banks, the French came over the land from the west, from the north and from the east. The natives knew of the expedition they sent to Boussa when they met Lugard's new force of trained Haussas and had to retire. We in England know that the object of that expedition was the extension of their frontier to a point below the Boussa rapids, so that by means of a port there and a short line of railway the international water-way secured by treaty on the river below them might be effectually connected with the longer stretch of navigable river above them. Those rapids made the international water-way a mockery, so they were almost willing to go to war for them, for the benefit of their empire in Timbuctoo. They had not the Hausa States in mind; but the Haussas think they had, for all they saw was that the army of the foreign power from Timbuctoo met the army of the foreign power from the river, and sat down and got the guns ready and thought better of it. The natives knew of the everlasting movement round Zinder on the north where no chief is sure even now whether he need feed the French troops free of charge or not, and they put their own construction on it; they do not believe that the French came all that way across the desert just to sit at Zinder. The natives knew of the rush the French made in 1901 into Bornu on the east, when the man whom

Fad-el-Allah had out-maneuvred, surprised him in his camp and massacred his following only to retire as the English column advanced. The Germans came up last year from the Cameroons but got no nearer than Yola, for the slave-raiding Emir there had already been deposed. They sent an expedition up their frontier to Lake Chad, but they did not cross over into Bornu. The Haussas know nothing of frontiers made in Europe and so would not understand that it was the French dash across the Cameroons in the previous year which occasioned that expedition; they would think it was another foreign power for them, and when we, for the same reason, sent the column up at the same time on our side of the frontier, it of course seemed to them that we went there to keep the Germans out. The Senoussi, the mysterious Senoussi, were also coming. They were gathering in the Sahara like the tornado on the horizon. The land was full of their spies, of traders with more money than goods, of drovers who sold cheap and cared not if their cattle died. Undoubtedly the Senoussi were coming and they were causing anxious moments in Hausaland just as they were in more than one European Council; but at the opportune moment—in September, 1902, the great Senoussi Chief died and the field was clear for the English.

It was clear to the native mind that there was going to be a change of masters. It was Fate, and no one was foolish enough to try to resist it except under compulsion. The people were agreeably surprised to find the foreign power so gentle and employing new methods under which they are getting fatter and happier than they have ever been before. We may congratulate ourselves on

our success; but we shall never know how much of it is due to the prophecy. We have gone as slowly and cautiously as if there was no prophecy, but who can say whether we should have done so well without it? We built a town at Quendon just under three hundred and fifty miles from Kano four years ago, and thought at the time that it was as far as we could venture to establish our base. This town was not even finished when we found we could safely venture to Lokoja at the junction of the rivers Niger and Benue, and now the concrete foundations of what were to have been the public offices are being cracked by the undergrowth and buried in the twelve-foot grass, and there is a yam-field where the clearing was made for the parade-ground. We had hardly settled in Lokoja when for political reasons it was decided to move the headquarters to Jebba, two hundred and fifty miles from Sokoto, where we built a town on each side of the river. Then came the trouble with Bida and Kontagora which brought peace all along the Kaduna river, and we built a town and a railway at Zungeru, two hundred miles from Kano. This was only last year, and we expected to settle down there for some time but, so soon as the rains were over, the King of Kano flooded the country with his gunmen, and the discovery of a plot at Zaria to kill all the white men compelled us to go to Kano, where the people refused to fight against us and the King's own following made but a feeble show of resistance.

If the general people were by this time satisfied that we were the foreign power, what must have been the feelings of the sixteenth Sultan of Sokoto when his turn came to assume the power which was but a sham? There were British Residents and garrisons established at Bautshi, a

hundred and fifty miles from Kano on the south east, at Zaria ninety miles from Kano on the south, at Kontagora, a hundred miles from Sokoto on the south, and at Illo, a hundred and fifty miles from Sokoto on the south west. These Residents had quietly but firmly taken their places, the local Emirs in each case being unable to resist them without the support of the people and the fifteenth Sultan having been too weak or too wise to attack them. These stations were bad enough, but the country was full of armed forces and the air was thick with rumours of victorious expeditions, such as belated tidings of the two companies of red-coated Haussas who had marched up through Bautshi, right on to Lake Chad, hailed by the people as deliverers, and without firing a shot except once when they were attacked by a slave-raiding Emir whose force was scattered and who was ignominiously captured and deported. Then there were the English forces convoying the French relief parties for Zinder, passing perhaps within fifty miles of Sokoto itself. Lastly there were the expedition which having captured Kano was coming on, and the Anglo-French boundary commission which had hauled its stores up the rushing waters of the Boussa rapids, marched along the Dallul Mauri, and was making straight for Sokoto. What did the Sultan know of the necessity of coming to Sokoto to fix its exact position in order to delimit the line of the circle at a radius of a hundred miles from it which was the agreed boundary? All he would see would be an armed force on the west which might be as formidable as the armed force on the east. He fled, and who would not have done so under the circumstances, in the face of the prophecy?

The country is now ours, and it will be well for us to remember the prophecy. It has perhaps made us the highest authority in the land—it may perhaps be our undoing. Every word of it has come true, literally true, but it is not yet finished, and everything which has happened will but strengthen the popular belief in it. The day of the foreign power has dawned, that day is to last four years, and then the Mahdi and the Millennium. We must neither forget that nor ignore it. A prophecy may perhaps be disregarded if it is not believed in; but it would be the height of folly to disregard a prophecy in which a nation really has faith. We ourselves may despise it, but that does not matter. We have four years in which to establish ourselves in the land, four years in which to get such a hold on the people that the Mahdi (there will be a Mahdi, there is always a Mahdi) when he rises shall not be strong enough to turn us out, or best of all that the people shall not want him to. We have four years in which to give them something like the Millennium without him. This may seem absurd, but it may not be so foolish after all. We have already brought a new kind of power and appointed a new kind of governor and petty governor altogether, a kind taking nothing without payment, burning no towns except as just punishment for crimes against every code of laws on earth, ravishing no women, looting no houses, making no slaves, and never happier than when settling disputes. When we remember that the Haussas had Mahommedanism thrust upon them, and the distance from the centre of that religion, we may perhaps think it not impossible to wean the people even from the desire for the Mahdi.

G. D. HAZZLEDINE.

F 2

## A WHITE STRANGER.

THE man was travelling incognito. He had been pretty nearly all round the world, seeking distraction in many lands and many ways; his mind was a storehouse of sun-filled memories, vivid, varied, beautiful, like a great golden goblet that has many jewels in it, and the music that they were set to in his thoughts was destined to echo through all the after years.

He had grown so tired of the old conventional routine of the Western world, tired of the meaningless forms and ceremonies, the pomps and the vanities that were the inevitable accompaniment of his rank, and that went to make up so many of his days. He had always been so surrounded and followed, so satiated with flattery, so weary of the perpetual effort to appear amused and entertained when he was neither one nor the other, until at last it had all become a burden greater than he cared to bear. The man's whole nature was one to which all restriction and etiquette were antagonistic; the dull details and the forced pleasures attached to a great administration irritated and fatigued him; the heirship that meant so much power and wealth and which so many envied, to him spelt only a distasteful bondage which he would have gladly laid aside once and for ever. This is the sort of grim ironical humour that destiny enjoys.

Feeling thus, he had been guilty of expressing, from time to time, some rather advanced if not republican opinions, had dared to be original both in thought and deed, had been heard to say that he wished himself

anything or anybody other than he was; in a word he had shown himself to be possessed of so unusual an intellect for a prince, more especially one born to be a ruler, that his father had grown alarmed, his mother grave and tearful, his relatives indignant.

He had been the unwilling recipient of much well-meant advice which found him thankless, some lengthy argument, a good deal of vehement protest, vague threats, and melancholy prognostications anent his future, until wearied beyond the saying he had at length broken away from it all and, with the firm intention of losing his identity for a brief while, had quitted the capital at the close of a late summer more than a year before. Since then he had loitered with delightful indefiniteness of purpose through Europe old and new; he had wandered in many forgotten spots in Spain, in Greece, in Turkey; had floated lazily up the Nile and, being a passionate lover of all things beautiful and ancient, had dreamed away many months in dear dead Indian cities. And now he was in Burmah; he had seen Mandalay and Rangoon, had paid all necessary calls, followed a paper-chase, drunk cocktails at the Gymkhana, played billiards at the German Club, and shot snipe on the Pegu river. Then he had turned from the European life to the native; he had wandered in the bazaars and attended marriage-feasts, had walked without his shoes on festival-day at the big Pagoda; he had seen great crowds of Burmans like gardens of flowers passing to and fro, had looked on a myriad

dusky jewelled shrines, ablaze with candles and steeped in the scent of the white frangipanni, had paused before images of gleaming gold, had seen countless *kyoungs* of carved teak wood and *zayats* nestling amidst *peepul* trees, full of poetry and peace; he had touched with reverent hand the gigantic bell that the Irrawaddy refused to yield up to the foreigner,—these and many another scene were blended in his memory in rare and enthralling confusion. And now he was in the district, staying with an Indian Civilian whose acquaintance he had made on board ship, and already he had been there three whole weeks, for the charm and the sorcery of the jungle had laid its hold upon him, and it is a sorcery that differs from and excels all others. Too intangible for description it lies in the magic of atmosphere, the contrast of exquisite colours, the languor of life, the glories of fiery sunsets and all the mystery of moonlit nights throbbing with light and with love,—this and more,—much more.

The man was delighted; he felt that he must needs halt, were it only to draw a long breath and re-arrange all these new Burmese pictures in his mental gallery. What fairer spot to pause in could he find than this jungle village, wrapped in all the stillness of a life unchanged for centuries?

They are beautiful, these little places for those who come with eyes to see and minds to understand; you will take from Burmah, as from Rome, what you yourself have carried there. Eric Lichtenstein brought a generous sympathy, a poet's fancy, and a mind innocent of that dread corrosive, prejudice. The loneliness that is like no other in all creation fascinated him. He revelled in the glow and glory of the mornings; the lazy stillness of the noons, when even

the crows can find no voice, soothed and lulled him; and the nights, when the silver shadows came and went over the dark masses of jungle and the great palms stood out against the divine clearness of a Burmese sky, charmed him as no other scenes, save some in Ceylon, had ever charmed.

To his host—whose complete indifference to his surroundings astonished him—the guest was a mystery. Frank Hammond marvelled how anyone could wish to linger in the country at all, most of all in the district; but then Frank Hammond was compelled to pass his life, or at least a considerable portion of it, there or in similar places, while the stranger could go when he pleased, and it happened to be the cool season; much is said in that.

A certain feeling of friendship had grown up between the two men who, dissimilar in so much, yet managed to shake hands across the distance of sentiment and opinion that divided them. Neither, perhaps, understood the other, and yet both got on together excellently well.

Frank Hammond, thoroughly practical and of a sound common sense, regarded life in general with tolerant eyes, was troubled with no undue amount of romance, and most decidedly carried nothing so unnecessary or cumbersome about with him as visionary ideals. The world to him,—born and bred in a stern school, brought up to work for his own living, and earning that living in an exile uncongenial in much and a climate that he loved none too well—was full of stern reality.

The other,—in person handsome and graceful to an unusual degree, possessing warm impulses and a temperament of most delicate sensitiveness, the current of whose entire life had run in a channel over which hung no dark shadows of poverty or

necessity—was naturally somewhat in the nature of a closed volume to the Englishman.

When as time passed his guest expressed no intention of departing, but rather his desire to study the language, Frank Hammond's eyes opened wide in astonishment. Here was a man, young (he was nine and twenty years old), free to follow his own bent, who had moved in the best and most brilliant society both in England and on the continent, who knew the gayest cities of the old world and who yet of his own choice elected to waste his days in a remote corner of Burmah!

Frank Hammond sought the reason in vain. The only visitor he had hitherto entertained had stayed three weeks in the country and two days with him, and two months later had published a weighty volume entitled *EASTERN IMPRESSIONS* which had been widely read and much discussed. He had been the last man on earth to wax enthusiastic about sunsets or pagodas, and was far more anxious about the quantity of his dinner than the quality of the finest scenery in the world.

Hammond had looked on Burmah in so many aspects for so many years that it was not perhaps astonishing that he should have lost all perception of its beauties, real or imaginary. To his guest each day held some new surprise, some fresh delight, and novelty bathed all things in its alluring brightness; to Hammond each day was but a likeness of the one gone before in being long, hot, and monotonous. Nevertheless, though marvelling inwardly, he was glad of Lichtenstein's company, which brought interest and distraction into his own arid existence; and a kind of regard grew up between them, who in all things differed so widely.

It was a lovely morning, full of

cool softness after the deluge of rains. The sky held many wonderful hues, creamy and golden and violet, and through that radiance the sun was shining dimly as yet, but still shining, upon the country which stretched away, looking in the far distance as if it joined the horizon. The broad sandy road leading to the village was lined on either side by a pathless jungle, almost impenetrable in its tangled density, through which the glare of a Burmese noon tide would be subdued almost to twilight. The place glowed with colour and pulsed with innumerable strange life. Dew-drops sparkled everywhere, on the orange flames of the bombax and on the orchids that the sun kissed and the butterflies loved. The leaves swayed and fluttered, the insects whispered murmuringly, while the dragonflies floated from flower to flower and the morning shadows danced in the green gloom of mango, bamboo and jack trees; far away the darkly wooded hills rose shrouded in pearl and pale blue mists fine as gossamer webs. The crows cawed loudly while herds of kalongs broke the solemn quietness with their shrieks as they whirled overhead before settling after their night-wanderings; now and then a timid jungle-fowl fluttered up from the ground, startled and afraid, or some bird of exquisite plumage flashed in the grass; once a jungle-cat skurried away like a mad thing into the rank undergrowth that choked the place.

It was all beautiful, incomparably beautiful, as Hammond and his visitor rode slowly under the early sun; it was very warm, as it so often is, even in the first hours of the morning, after rain. In their wake followed a creaking bullock-cart filled with villagers, evidently bound for one of the countless pagodas that raise their umbrella tops in the amber



sunshine; now and then a Burman carrying a basket of fruit passed, but otherwise the place was still as death.

After a while the ponies broke into a trot and they rode for some distance in silence, the rapid thump of a Burmese *tat* being not conducive to conversation. They passed many pineapple plantations and *kyoungs* and one or two half decayed moss-grown statues of Buddha meditating in the primeval solitude; then gradually the heavy timber gave way to cane-brake, until a turn in the long road brought them somewhat abruptly to a tiny Shan village that slept peacefully in a clearing under the near shade of giant trees.

The huts, a dozen or so in all, were the usual specimens of jungle architecture; bamboos lashed together formed the floors which stood about three feet from the muddy ground, while the thatches were of *dhunni* leaves. A rest-house, much eaten by white ants, and a tangled growth of scrub completed the scene. Almost the only strangers that ever came there were one or two bamboo-cutters, and once a year a travelling silk merchant; yet it was a very happy, and in its way a very lovely spot with its trees and its flowers and its birds.

"We'll get some water here," said Hammond, as he slackened speed; "and I'll show you one of the prettiest girls in Burmah, if she's about."

As he pulled up before one of the huts, two little withered old women, dressed in blue and white *tamiens* much the worse for wear, hobbled gleefully out from behind some pumpkin creepers, smiling all over their wrinkled shrivelled faces when Hammond greeted them in Burmese, which he could speak passably well.

How were they since he had last seen them? Had the pain gone from Mah Lay's ear? Had they sold their *dorians* well in the bazaar?—and so on and

so on. Meanwhile the old woman's grandson,—the many lumps on whose brawny tattooed chest testified to the generous supply of charms against death or illness with which he was fortified—had brought out and unrolled a piece of matting which he proceeded to spread upon a wooden ledge-like seat; then he fetched some cheroots, a battered betel-box, and finally water and sugar-cane for the ponies, while a lean cat blinked curiously at the group.

"Where is Mah Oo?" asked Hammond at length, as he accepted the offer of a match from a box that one of the old ladies (they were both so much alike you could never have told one from the other) took from out her grey hair.

"Call Mah Oo," said the young man in a tone of authority to a small boy lounging near; "the Thakin asks for her."

In a few minutes Mah Oo came shyly forward, her black hair and brown eyes shining in the white misty sunlight that was round about her. Her *tamien* was of sober red, her jacket spotlessly white, her complexion unusually fair, a fairness that extended to her small bare feet thrust into green velveteen slippers. The gaze of both men lingered restfully on the graceful figure sharply outlined against a background of curled palm-branches. She made a pretty picture as she stood there, a picture which had in it all the glow and warmth of her country's sun.

She paused in shy embarrassment before the look of one of the Thakins. Her quick glance rapidly scanned his fair, cold Northern beauty, the pale gold of his hair and the blue of his eyes,—a striking contrast to the short, dark Englishman. In Mah Oo's eyes he was as beautiful as he was strange and unlike herself or anyone that she had ever seen; and though she did

not seem to look (which would have been sadly unbecoming in a girl), yet Mah Oo saw every detail from his lofty height to the curiously shaped sapphire ring that flashed sullen green fires on his right hand.

Hammond addressed the girl through the interpretation of the elder women, but beyond her name and a fleeting smile and shy glances they could extract nothing, and the ponies being now watered, both men mounted. Hammond tossed a four-anna piece to a little baby in its mother's arms, and then rode away beside his companion, down the road under the arching trees out into the broad belt of sunshine beyond; all the gray and white of the early mists had lifted and the sun was shining in a sky of staring blue.

"A pretty Eastern child," said Lichtenstein, after a few minutes. "I like the brown skin; it suits the intense light as a fair one never can."

"There you're right," answered Hammond. "See an English woman, — as I've seen them scores of times in Rangoon — compare their complexion with the native, and it's an engraving to a picture. No; a Burmese woman in Burmah by all means, but not elsewhere."

After this they rode on in silence.

Later on, when Hammond had gone into court, his guest, having finished his daily lesson with his old *sayah*, went to lie in a long cane chair on the verandah, as was his custom, and read a volume of German poems; but ever and anon his thoughts would wander and the book slip from his fingers, while he mused on its philosophy, or possibly on graver matters, and his gaze went to the green spaces and sunny shadows in the compound below, till he sank into sleep. His dreams were broken and varied, but haunted throughout by brown eyes

in which some stray sunbeams seemed to have lost their way.

It was evening: the long golden light of the afterglow, that is only seen in hot countries, still lingered in the sky; a few lamps were beginning to twinkle faintly in the huts of the village; scattered about, waiting for what might be flung to them, were the usual assortment of ducks and hens and pariah dogs, enjoying themselves in the mud.

Seated sewing, a large cheroot between her lips, was Mah Oo.

"Have you forgotten me?" The question seemed borne upon the breeze. Mah Oo looked suddenly up; before her stood the stranger with the blue eyes, and with him his old Burman teacher.

Mah Oo's surprise was very great, as she rose hastily and answered him in a faltering negative. The place was very quiet and still; it was the hour when the villagers were preparing for their evening rice, and they were practically alone.

Mah Oo, having brought matting for a seat and cigars, stood on one side, the shadow of a pleased smile on her lips and the heap of half made silk jackets at her feet.

With the help of the old Burman Lichtenstein asked many questions as he smoked; she answered him readily, though never would she have dreamt of addressing him first, and subsided always into roseate silence. Imperceptibly, however, and with infinite tact he drew from her something of the little simple ways and things that went to make up her life, such a happy, simple, ignorant life as it was, and yet full of a poetry and loveliness all its own. And all the while the blue eyes said to the brown ones many things that his lips were powerless to convey.

Meanwhile news of his presence

had spread, and a group of curious neighbours had drawn timidly near. The men drifted leisurely up, adjusting turban or *pasoh* as they came; the women left their cooking, some staring lazily as if even the sight of a white man sitting among them did not call for too much attention, others with all their eyes.

There was Mah Sin Bin, a stout sturdy woman with her small children clinging to her *tamien* and a baby, innocent of all clothing save a gold bangle, sitting quite comfortably on her hip. There was Moung Pay, the keeper of the toddy-shop, and Kyaw Boo, who told the young men and maidens their fortunes by consulting the stars and was held in great awe and admiration by the entire village. There was Nga Tha Boo a tall thin old man and with him came his two daughters. Mah Shway, Mah Oo's adopted mother, issued from the back of the hut where she had been busy preparing rice, and examined the stranger well and minutely, chewing betel the while; she touched his riding-boots, looked long at his hands, and then evidently somewhat satisfied returned to her cooking-pots. The rest gathered together, and gazing at Lichtenstein observed every detail of his dress and appearance; they would have liked to have come close and touched his clothes, but pride withheld them. None of them spoke in the great Thakin's presence, but when after awhile they withdrew they talked much between themselves in hushed and curious whispers, envying Mah Oo not a little. "This has been a *poay-nya*," said Kyaw Boo as he shuffled off. Afterwards they all asked Mah Oo many questions about this stranger from the country of the pale-faced people, questions which she was wholly unable to answer.

The stranger himself was much amused, while something, it may have

been the absolute idleness and good humour of the men and women, reminded him of villages seen in Ireland where he had once spent a hunting-season years ago. When at length he rose he said, "I will return."

Mah Oo lay long awake on her mat that night, watching the bats float past in the shadows, while eyes that were like the deep blue sea looked in memory into hers, while Mah Shway indulged in premature matrimonial visions arising from the stranger's visit such as wrought wild work in dreamland.

The next evening and for many following Mah Oo watched for him, but he did not come. He had forgotten his promise. She thought it was quite natural that he should; he had his own life, and between it and hers how many leagues there were! She was without vanity of any kind, this Eastern child, in whom woman life was dawning in all its radiance, and in a vague way she understood the rigid rules of caste and race.

But he had not forgotten; indeed he could not, even had he wished, and on the fifth evening he came and talked to her and even rolled pān and ate it. Gradually, not all at once, they became quite friends! How prettily she laughed at his conversational efforts, how adroitly she helped him with a word here and another there, how intuitively she seemed to guess at all that he desired so much to say; what a pure and chivalrous tenderness was born in his heart for this life that was steeped in all the gladness of its native sunbeams!

Gradually he came to tell her of many things, painting, as well as he could, the worlds that lived and laughed and loved away there where the sun went down in the land of the white people; and Mah Oo listened rapturously, her eyes opened in

wonder, while the amber light of evening fell through the leaves. But when he asked her if she would not like to see all the marvels of which he so imperfectly told her she answered slowly, "Yes, because it must all be very strange and beautiful, but only as I should like to see the great Shway Dagone Pagoda on a festival day, just for once—besides in those countries of which you speak they would laugh at me!"

He found that, tell her what he might, he never could tempt her even in thought from the place of her birth. She was quite contented; a philosopher himself could achieve no more, if indeed he could ever achieve so much. Her loyalty to all things in the poor little place touched him, and more than ever was he convinced that a lowly lot was the only one that happiness ever tinged permanently, convinced as are so many men who have great rank and great wealth.

To this lovely simplicity and youth of hers something somewhere in his own nature responded; vaguely he felt that it might be possible to grow to care for her as he had not cared for years. The villagers had become accustomed to these strange visits of his and had ceased to be curious about his person though not about his motives. Often he told them tales through the interpretation of his *sayah*, of places and people he had seen, funny tales and beautiful, and mournful ones as his memories came to him, but all such as would amuse or appeal to his listeners; he talked in the quiet languid way that was so characteristic of him, watching with amused interest the different emotions displayed on the brown faces as on a mirror.

Mah Oo had a quick intelligence, and she picked out in her own mind all that she heard and comprehended it, and when her shyness vanished

she asked many things, things curious, fanciful, quaint but never by any chance stupid. Lichtenstein was interested, diverted, happy. As yet he had not given a thought to how far and fast this Burmese girl was creeping into his affections, or to the manner in which the tongues of the onlookers were already beginning to wag. He had not the least idea that he was the constant object round which endless surmises, sly nods and monetary calculations circulated. The man's knowledge of the country and its inhabitants was necessarily of a meagre description—to him a native girl had all the divinity of her sex. He was blissfully unconscious of other men's views on the subject, and of how very unromantic and sordid a business is the usual wooing between the white and the brown.

Mah Oo, so free from spot or stain, in a halo of sun-filled warmth, charmed and enchained his fancy by the subtle force of a deep and wide contrast.

Time, full of solace and rest, ebbed slowly away. The man wrote and painted a little and tried to reproduce from memory on canvas an Eastern girl in the first flush of earliest girlhood, but tore up his sketches one after another, dissatisfied. He had wished to paint her just as she was, but he could not reproduce the colouring or the air, or the light, or the changing play of her expression, at least not to his own satisfaction.

Meanwhile, often and more often, of an evening he paused on his outward or homeward ride to see Mah Oo, until at length by choice he always took that road in preference to any other, and thus gradually he came first to realise that the girl had grown to love him. Every glance of her innocent eyes told him so with an eloquence of which their owner was quite unconscious, and the man's

heart glowed with gratitude; when others had cared, it had always been, or rather he had fancied it had been, for his possessions, not himself, but here all was different and the child's transparent feelings touched and sank into his soul with a vivid and passionate warmth.

Mah Oo did not look beyond the present hour. She moved and breathed in a beautiful, dim, indistinct world of her own creating, peopled by one who had a graceful and lofty bearing and eyes the hue of summer seas. How could she know of the strangeness, the sadness, the hopelessness of this love that had been born of a word, of a glance? She never paused to think or question when her heart, like some small caught bird, fluttered at his coming or grew sick with disappointment if he came not—to her only was it wonderful that he should ever think to come at all.

To Mah Oo he appeared, and must ever do so, in the light of a king who had only to stretch out his hand to become the arbiter and master of her life, or of just so much of it as he chose. Should he wish to do so every opportunity was his, all the village would have aided him; so much the man to a certain extent realised, but having more than ordinary compassion, he paused. Between him and her from his point of view, there could be nothing—nothing.

At no time a slave to his passions he cherished insane ideas of honour and the sanctity of the sex, such ideas as you sometimes find in books, but seldom indeed in life. He had lived with those who, making a science of infidelity, held all women lightly and believed in little here and nothing hereafter, but never at any time abandoning himself to their guidance he had kept the dignity and reserve that so well became his grave romantic

temperament. And so he carried no such guilty memory with him as the reflection that he had ever (even in the maddest hours of five early and reckless years) been the first to lead any woman, high born or low born, across that irrevocable borderland between sin and sinlessness. That in all such matters East and West are strangely different, he failed to realise, and he respected women as women, apart from their race. It was just one of those exaggerations of fine and delicate sentiment that had made him on many occasions seem both incomprehensible and foolish to individuals and even to the world in general.

Mah Oo was to him as some tender blossom, for in his existence from force of circumstances she could live only for a day. If he let her alone she would think no more of him, save as some half godlike being who had condescended to stay and talk with her awhile. So she would marry; she would grow stouter and the fair face would lose its spiritual childish look; she would have children, little brown soft children, who would tumble and play and laugh and cry there in the sunbeams like their mother before them. She would lead the usual, placid eventless life of the women of her race, counting time only by the harvest of paddy or the changes of the seasons. Then as the years went by she would grow bent and old and garrulous like Mah Lay, and then some morning the dawn would find her still asleep and they who found her would cry a little and then forget.

He could see all her future so clearly, if he only left her, but if he did not, if he did not—well perhaps had his lines been cast like Hammond's in the country he would not have hesitated. Could he have given her something adequate in exchange for her

untouched feelings then he might have been tempted, but he knew that never could he undo the chains fastened by Destiny about him, and therefore it was not in his power to give her anything more than a few weeks out of the sum total of his days. Should he sacrifice her to that? His honour and his conscience alike told him no.

She was ignorant and content, this little field flower. His manhood told him that it would be beneath his generosity to do otherwise than leave her so; he knew how perilously easy it is to make shipwreck of that frail vessel called contentment; besides he was not of those who sing of brotherhood and who yet spare neither brother nor sister at the bidding of occasion. Nevertheless Eric Lichtenstein was no hero, far from it, but merely a man of a warm and pitiful nature and a wider generosity than most, who tried to follow and act up to a sense of right, as he saw it. Whether in this he was quixotic each must decide for himself.

Frank Hammond, and others, would have considered such scruples folly without parallel. Wisdom or folly, which was it?

When Lichtenstein realised the goal to which his footsteps might lead him, he determined to see Mah Oo no more, and for many days he avoided the village both in his rides and drives. Yet her image pursued him and her memory lingered with him most persistently until he began to recognise the fact that it might take all his courage to say farewell. So thinking, he yielded to an unwise impulse and one day he went in the green shadows of the early dawn to Mah Oo, and her welcome in its glad spontaneity, how it touched and unnerved him, and those wistful eyes of hers—there are many wonderful eyes in Burmah that mean nothing

that they say—but Mah Oo's meant all that they said—how could he wish her goodbye? What if instead of so doing he resigned his world and sought happiness or rather the semblance of it with this girl, who had the heart of a woman and the glad beautiful innocence of a child? But a very little reflection showed him how impossible was such a dream. Private people could do these things, but not one placed in the fierce light of publicity; such an one cannot forsake the many duties confided to his keeping, nor must he purchase his own joys at the cost of the fortunes of so many others. Once more he felt the old weariness arise within him at the thought of that life so changeful and so filled that awaited him across the seas in Europe. There—there would be no time for sweet lazy dalliance with love in the sunshine under palm trees—save in his dreams.

That night as Hammond and his guest lounged on the verandah sipping their coffee with the still starlit skies overhead and a full moon golden and glorious shining down on the country, the host after a long pause said in a jocular tone of inquiry, "How much longer are you going to waste your time with that Burmese girl? You are treating her with as much deference as if she was white," and he laughed a little as he leaned back and blew a wreath of smoke into the air.

"And why not?" asked his companion in the still slow tones that made one of his special charms. "Is she not a woman?"

"Yes, of course, but only a native one; it is not the same thing—they have such different ideas and ways." He spoke in some derision.

"Ah, there speaks the Englishman. You have, if you will pardon my saying so, the prejudices of your



class. After all prejudice is only another name for ignorance, and you know nothing about Mah Oo."

"Possibly, but you cannot surely compare her with an English girl?"

"My friend, certainly not. Who am I that I should take such a liberty? We of course know that England has entered into a perpetual contract with the Almighty for the monopoly of all the virtues—and yet," he added in an altered tone, "it seems to me that if anything human is quite pure and near to Heaven it must be the white soul of an innocent girl. You will admit that she is that, I suppose?"

"My dear fellow," Hammond broke in in his blunt fashion, "you are really taking this matter too seriously. A native is a native—minus any soul I should say—and that you should talk or feel about one as you would about one of your own countrywomen is mere moonshine."

"Why?" asked Lichtenstein, quietly looking up.

"Oh, my good man, don't ask me conundrums," Hammond replied with vague impatience, "because it's too preposterous. If you like the girl, take her—and leave her when she wearies you. It is absurd to have any scruples where a Burmese girl is concerned," and as he leaned over and reached for a box of cheroots he thought inwardly, "What a romantic simpleton it is!"

"Because she is not white—is that the drift of your argument? What a monstrous, hateful idea! You advocate my having neither heart nor conscience in my dealings with the girl because her skin is so many degrees darker than mine or yours. I fail altogether to see the reason; were we in a village in Europe would you offer me the same advice? You know that you know not."

"Of course not," Hammond admitted.

"Then why do it here?"

"It is entirely different, only you will not see it, and I am only telling you how any of my own world would act under the circumstances."

"Then if that is what your world would do I can only say that I consider it a very contemptible, unprincipled one." His tone was one of disgust.

"I don't know; there are some very fine fellows in it." Hammond spoke with a certain amused displeasure.

"Oh, I know these fine fellows, men who would destroy a dozen native women in a year and excuse themselves—were excuse necessary—on the ground that they were natives."

"You entirely forget the racial distinction," was the response.

"I don't at all, any more than I forget that what would be wrong in another is all right in an Englishman; it must be a most comforting reflection and render the idea of eternity possible."

There was silence for a few moments while Hammond mixed a whiskey and soda and the river sang on in the clear distance beyond. Then he said, "All right, if you like to believe such an amazing absurdity as that, you must; but we wander from our subject. Once more, at the risk of offending you,—what do you really intend to do with the girl?"

"What should I do with her?" asked Lichtenstein, and he turned round in his chair and looked Hammond straight in the eyes. "As a matter of fact I have thought about it and have come to the conclusion that I would rather not meddle with any fate, even so small and humble as one as hers of whom we speak."

"You may be quite sure that the old lady, if not the girl herself, is looking forward to the *thakin* giving a few hundred rupees for a work of

merit and taking Mah Oo in exchange; even I expected it; it is the custom of this benighted land," replied Frank Hammond regarding his guest from over the rim of his glass.

"Why do people always credit one with the coarsest motives?" Lichtenstein sighed as he spoke. "If I were to come forward at all, I should marry her, and that unfortunately is impossible."

"Marry her!" echoed the listener blankly.

"Certainly, it is far preferable to ruining her."

"It is no doubt a good joke, but I utterly lack the power to appreciate it," said Hammond incredulous.

"There is no joke intended; I am not in a mood for jokes. We look at things differently, that is all; I decline to have the weight of a soul upon my conscience, even when only a native one, and no sneers, friendly though they be, will change me. This girl is perfectly good and pure; why should I make her otherwise?"

"Your scruples do you infinite credit, but I can assure you that they are cruelly wasted. The people for whom you entertain these old world notions could not even be brought to understand, much less to admire them! Ruin—disgrace—what meaning would such words convey to them?"

His listener smiled. "I don't want either their admiration or their comprehension, I only want my own ease of mind. What if I told you something more, and that is that I care for this child so much—she is so different to all the many I have known—that I feel that I can only go away and leave her!"

Hammond moved impatiently while he replied in a compassionate tone, such as he might have used to a fractious child. "What? Why that

I am almost inclined to think that you must be on the fair road to adorn a lunatic asylum; such high flown notions and all for a native girl—whom a few hundred rupees would compensate for anything . . . . What unutterable folly . . . . I know these women, and you don't, and there is not one of them worth the waste of an ounce of good affection; they all prefer a betel-chewing, curry-smelling Burman to the finest and most gallant white man that ever lived."

"As to their being worthy or not is beside the question. When one loves I do not think one ever pauses to think of such a thing—one naturally regards the person as being all that is desirable—in any case it is the giver, be the gift of the affections or not, who should determine the measure of what he gives, but that measure should not be according to the demerits of the receiver." Lichtenstein answered indifferently as he rolled himself a fresh cigarette.

Hammond shrugged his shoulders. "I have no doubt that you are quite right, but I cannot follow your reasoning," he said. "I only feel glad that you cannot obey your vivid imagination, or you would probably marry this girl out of some absurd notion of duty or other and you would regret it all your life."

"I don't know about the regretting—perhaps I should and perhaps I should not, but I am quite sure that were I to do as you advise there would be with me a remorse that would never leave me," the man spoke in a tired voice. "I am an absurd sentimentalist, no doubt, and wrong, quite wrong. Nevertheless, and perhaps not of my own free will but because I cannot help it, this child's honour is to me a real thing, just as if she were of my own complexion, no more, no less. So I cannot treat her

as you suggest. To you this will appear a folly worse than that of fools, but the loss, if loss it be, is mine. However, I tell you, though I hardly expect that you will honour me by believing it, that something in her grand and absolute innocence holds me back, something,—how shall I explain it, words cannot convey it,—is with her much more than all this, something that will, I fancy, be with her when she is fourscore."

His host glanced at him evidently with a desire of ascertaining if he was serious, then said drily, "Such high and chivalrous conceptions of the whole duty of man are, I honestly confess, quite beyond my poor intelligence, so please forgive me if I find them strange and unconvincing. That you can be seriously in love with this girl I cannot credit for an instant; that you should hesitate to take her under your protection is of course only one of the high flown and exaggerated ideas of a person wholly ignorant of the East and the Oriental!" He rose as he spoke.

"As you will," was the indifferent answer. "Frankly my scruples are but another form of selfishness. I am coward enough to shrink from the possible remorse following upon an act beyond atonement; once I have known what it is to cry out in vain, longing for the past to return, so that many things might be undone, many words unsaid—my future must be free of such regrets. But I have kept you listening to my absurd ravings long enough. Good night."

For fully an hour afterwards Lichtenstein remained smoking thoughtfully, his face grave with many memories, while his host snored happily under his mosquito curtain. A quaint little figure, with pathetic brown eyes, came to him in memory out of the night, and the pain and the perplexity deepened at his heart.

Why had this disturbing influence come to mar the even harmony of the present? The thought hurt him strangely. Nevertheless he was convinced that he was taking the right path, and no power on earth should make him waver. He was conscious that Hammond regarded him in a very unflattering light. Fortunately he had sufficient moral courage to ignore any outside opinion. Was Hammond right and he wrong? Each took an extreme view, and there is seldom any lasting wisdom in extremes.

If only the years were his own, how gladly he would have taken her to his heart and found with her the realisation of those fair phantasies that youth and love beget—but it could not be. There was no charm that could make him other than he was, and being so, many duties waited on him; great interests beckoned to him, countless lives called on his; these past months had been a dreamful interlude that he should remember all his life amid all the tiresome pageantries and constant demands, the painful publicity, the satiety and dissatisfaction of the future. A life wholly different from that of the great world, one screened from all malice, in which quiet joys would replace disappointed ambitions, was what would have appealed to and satisfied his pensive nature, a life of freedom, of colour, of passion and seclusion was what he would have chosen, but he could not—he could not.

Society with a hundred clamorous voices claimed him from it; it was entirely impossible to wander far or for long. Indifferent as he was to the desires that sway other men, all the great and magnificent gifts with which fate had endowed him found him capriciously ungrateful: happiness—as this man saw it—waited under the towering bamboos in the

golden sunshine of Burmah; it did not lie, it never would, for him in Europe.

And he must pass it by, and, this being so, it behoved him to deal with Mah Oo sacredly and honestly to the end. When he said good-bye to the East, which would be very soon, it would soothe him to think that he had refrained, at pain to himself, from plucking this little wild tropical flower that was of no more account in the wide universe than a blade of grass, but had left it as he found it blooming in the sunshine under the palm shadows by the river.

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"Mah Oo, I am going away." The words were softly, slowly spoken.

"The *thakin* is going away," the girl echoed blankly.

"Yes," he answered her, standing there beside her in the soft gloom of the coming evening.

Over Mah Oo's face came that strange sickly pallor which only dark skins know. Her eyes grew clouded, her heart empty and cold. This pale-faced stranger who was nothing to her and who yet filled all her waking and sleeping thoughts was going back to his own. Why was the pang of such a thought so lacerating to the soul of the child, why had the world suddenly grown gray and chill? Mah Oo did not know.

"The *thakin* will come back?" she asked at last and a quiver echoed through her words.

He looked at her where she stood in the evening light. She was like a sun-flower growing up out of a dim, dusky garden; he noted the luminous eyes, the warm olive skin, the lips shut close with pain, the small brown hands hanging listlessly at her side—

a strange, lonely figure with all her grace and depth of colour, and a great wave of tenderness and of pity swept over him.

For a moment he hesitated. Why not linger in this far Paradise? Time was still his; why not stay its passing joys awhile—why not—why not—even if the girl suffered in the end would it matter? He thought he heard a man's mocking voice answering, "Only a native woman." For a moment all his wise resolutions trembled unsteadily in the balance, but it was only for a moment and then came repentant consciousness.

"Yes, I will come back, Mah Oo," he replied with a sigh for the falseness of what he said.

"The *thakin* will come back soon," she cried hopefully, "before the waxing of the moon?"

"Not so soon, Mah Oo, not so soon." He spoke with a grave and mournful tenderness. His throat grew dry, his eyes dim, for he would come back never.

A broad shaft of dying sunlight fell between them.

"Good bye, my child," he said softly in his own tongue and took one of her hands in his and raised it to his lips; its touch was quite cold. Then turning he left her there in the green stillness where the sun rays fell about her in yellow splendour.

"Poor little Mah Oo," he murmured as he went his way, a restless pain and regret stirring within him.

It was her requiem.

He looked back once. The village lay behind him in all its tranquil brightness forming the frame to a picture that he carried with him through many a future year.

M. CHAN-TOON.